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## The Church Crisis and Japanese Nationalism

### I

IT is now over a year since the Church crisis in Japan occurred. Of its course the main outlines are now clear. First there was the triumph of the reactionary totalitarian leaders over the supporters of democracy as a result of the collapse of France. Then came the change of Cabinet in July, 1940, and the negotiations which were to lead to the signing of the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy in September. Perhaps as a by-product of these negotiations, perhaps as a deliberate move to inflame public opinion and force the Cabinet's hand, the military police saw fit at the beginning of August to arrest a number of British subjects and to start an investigation of organizations under British control or influence. The Rising Sun Petroleum Company (a unit of Shell) and the Salvation Army were the first to suffer, and it appeared that the Sei Ko Kwai (the only Church in Japan with close connexions with Britain) was the next on the list. Hence Bishop Naide's approach to the gendarmerie to find out on what terms the Sei Ko Kwai could escape such an investigation, and the pledge given that henceforth no foreigner should hold a position of authority in the Church and that no further foreign grants should be received. Hence also the military authorities' demand that the other Churches should follow the example of the Sei Ko Kwai.

Meanwhile the Education Ministry (whose religious bureau has the oversight of all religious bodies) was insisting that the Protestant bodies should fulfil both their own professed hopes of unity and the prevailing national trend towards unification and centralized control by merging into one conglomerate body. This united Church has now come into being, Japanese authority having thus proved more efficacious than four centuries of Christian effort in closing the fissures of Protestantism. For a time it will retain something of the character of a federation,

but when the Lutheran wolf and the Salvationist lamb have learnt to feed together and the Methodist lion to eat straw like the Quaker bullock the union will be complete. Into this united body the Sei Ko Kwai has not entered on the somewhat strange grounds that it is "neither Protestant nor Catholic." "Neither . . . nor" should, of course, have been "both . . . and." The Sei Ko Kwai feels in Japan, as elsewhere, that it has a distinctive life and experience which is both Catholic and Evangelical, and that it would be a disaster if Catholicism and Protestantism became organized into two opposing camps with no mediating influence between.

There are thus now four Christian Churches in Japan—Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant. All of them are under Japanese control and supported by Japanese money. Everywhere foreigners have been removed from positions of authority, and in the Anglican and Protestant Churches two-thirds and more of the missionaries have withdrawn from Japan. In some cases withdrawals have been directly due to the growing international tension and the British and American consular advices to their people to leave. But in most the reason has been the inability to continue work and the realization that the presence of British and American workers was an embarrassment to Japanese fellow-Christians. The Orthodox Church has few foreign workers to be affected, while the Roman foreign missionaries have found themselves in a less delicate position, partly because the Church of Rome has its headquarters in an Axis capital and partly because its foreign personnel is predominantly continental European rather than Anglo-Saxon.

## II

What is the significance of all these changes? Has the Christian Church sold itself to hysterical nationalism? Has it betrayed the hopes and brought to nothing the labours of three generations of missionaries in Japan?

To answer these questions adequately one must see the Christian movement in the context of the prevailing trends of life in modern Japan. It is less than a century since Japan opened her doors, after an isolation of more than two hundred years, to foreign influences. In that short space she has advanced from a feudal civilization not very different

in level from ours at the time of the Wars of the Roses to the status of a first-class modern power. She has absorbed all that Western science and technology could teach her. Her navy has been built on British lines, her army on the model of Germany's. Law she has learnt in France and educational influences have come mainly from Germany and the United States. All the superstructure of modern Western civilization has been reproduced in Japan and built on to the existing framework of Japanese life. Japan, however, has failed to see that Western civilization, however imperfectly and faultily, yet in an undeniable sense, has been built on a foundation provided by the Christian tradition. That tradition has given the West a standard of conduct, a scale of values, a sense of personality, a faith and a hope which, despite tragic betrayals, cannot be ignored in any picture of Western civilization in its classic form. Japan has therefore found herself in a situation somewhat analogous to those Western nations where Christian faith has lost its power and the decaying influences of secularism have supervened. While they now are post-Christian, Japan has all along been non-Christian. In those Western nations a vast reaction has set in—for man cannot live by bread alone—and men have sought in the gods of nationalism, blood and soil, or the dialectical processes of history, a faith that shall undergird their life and provide an adequate foundation for the civilization they seek to build. In Japan also the pressures of secularism have led to a search for an adequate spiritual foundation for the nation's life. And inevitably the solution has been found in mystic nationalism.

Japanese legend tells of how the Sun-goddess, Amaterasu-O-mi-kami, chose the islands of Japan as her favourite land and placed her grandson on the throne of Japan as the first Emperor. Through all the centuries of the nation's story, it is claimed, the Imperial line has provided a mystic link with the dawn of Japanese history, so that to-day the Emperor bears in himself a numinous character. He is at once the heir of Japan's long line of rulers which stretches back, according to official teaching, in unbroken succession for 2,600 years, the representative on earth of the beneficent powers that watch over Japan's destiny, the source of sovereignty, and the father of his people. Nothing is more congenial to Japanese people than the thought of their nation as a family, of which the Emperor is the head. It

provides a warmth of feeling and a sense of corporate dignity compared with which democratic ideas of universal suffrage seem cold and thin.

Here, then, is material to hand for Japan's nationalist faith. And by every means of propaganda—in school, over the radio, through magazines and newspapers—that faith is inculcated. It has its feast-days—the anniversary of the founding of the Japanese Empire and the Emperor's birthday are the chief; its shrines—that of the Sun-goddess at Ise, the Meiji shrine in Tokyo built to enshrine the spirit of the great Emperor Meiji (1868-1912), and the Yasukuni shrine, also in Tokyo, where the spirits of soldiers and sailors and others who have given their lives for Japan are deified, are the most prominent; its acts of reverence—every important meeting now begins with a formal bow in the direction of the Imperial Palace, while conductresses call for bows from passengers in buses and trams every time they pass the Palace or one of the great shrines; its faith—Japan has a sacred mission to proclaim the Imperial way and bring peace and prosperity to East Asia and eventually to the world. " Hakko ichiu " (the eight corners of the universe under one roof)—a Confucian doctrine which expressed well the pride of old Imperial China—has been taken over without acknowledgment and now proclaims the dignity not of ancient Peking, but of modern Tokyo. It is on the basis of this faith, proclaimed by some indeed as a cloak for jingoist imperialism, but by others as a genuine effort to provide the nation with an adequate spiritual foundation, that Japan to-day is building her " new structure."

## III

It cannot be denied that this faith influences and inspires Japanese Christians as well as non-Christians. The traditions of a country are not something distinct from its citizens; they are part of their very life. It is not the least of Mr Churchill's great qualities that he has that sense of history and can enable Englishmen to feel that they are writing a new chapter in a great story that covers the centuries of England's life. Similarly, Japanese Christians respond to the appeal for service and devotion to Japan's Emperor and Japan's mission. They too are his children, they too feel the blood of renaissant Japan in their veins, they too share the sense that Japan has now reached adulthood,

that she no longer needs the tutelage of the West, that henceforth she can plot her own course in fulfilment of her destiny. That is why Japanese Christians, who last summer were perturbed to find themselves so close to official investigation, have now accepted the changes as right and proper. " Very sorry to interrupt your work in mid-career, but we want to, and we can, run things ourselves now. Thank you very much. Good-bye." That was the general attitude when the writer left Japan in May. That feeling found frequent expression at the General Synod of the Sei Ko Kwai last April, and was embodied in the Resolution of Thanks to Missions and Missionaries which, after expressing deep appreciation of all that they had done in the past, offered " deep-felt thanks to the Bishops, Clergy and Women Missionaries who, with a noble spirit, in a generous attitude and in prayerful obedience to the Divine Will, when our Church had reached the status of a self-supporting body in the 2,600th memorable year of the founding of our country, left the land to which they had been called."

Then, too, it should be remembered that the propaganda connected with the " new structure " is on a high moral plane. The self-seeking and the emphasis on the profit-motive which are regarded as the characteristic marks of outmoded capitalism are contrasted with the new stress on unselfish service to the State. There is real point to the contrast, and who can blame Japanese Christians for supporting a movement that places service before selfishness? Is it not, they feel, an emphasis wholly congenial to the Christian spirit? Similarly, the " new order in East Asia " is presented in lofty moral terms. The " selfish exploitation of Western imperialism " is contrasted with Japan's " altruistic efforts for the benefit of the peoples of East Asia." In her war with China, it is repeatedly asserted, Japan seeks no territorial acquisitions and no indemnity. That Japanese imperialism in China turns out too often to be a cold-blooded form of racketeering is beside the point here, for the dismal realities of the situation are hidden from the ordinary Japanese, Christian and non-Christian alike, by the rigid censorship of all news. Thus to high-minded Japanese (and Christians may surely be included in this class) the official version of Japan's nobility in East Asia is as inspiring and appealing as Kipling's " white man's burden " to an earlier generation of British

Christians. They also feel the urge to bring the blessings of Christianity and Japanese civilization to "the lesser breeds without the law."

Thirdly, it must be emphasized that no direct clash on fundamentals of faith has yet occurred. Tension is inevitable between the universalist faith of Christianity and the nationalism of State Shinto. But Japanese authority, by declaring that State Shinto is "not religion but patriotism," by laying down no obligatory creed nor enquiring of those who take part in its ceremonies whether their attitude expresses worship in the full sense or merely ordinary respect, has surrounded modern mystic nationalism with a convenient vagueness that appeals to the Japanese mind. For that mind is not analytical or rational, but instinctive and sentimental, and it avoids a direct clash whenever possible. One has only to sit in on the interminable discussions of a Japanese committee to realize that! In that very vagueness there is profound danger, for it is easier to slide down a slippery slope than walk deliberately down a flight of steps. Yet many of those in positions of leadership in the Japanese Church realize the dangers and are on the watch. Last October, for instance, when the Sei Ko Kwai was refusing on grounds of theological conviction to heed the Education Ministry's urgent demand that it should enter the new United Church, two of the Bishops went home, changed into their thickest underwear, and said good-bye to their families preparatory to spending the winter in an unheated jail. Happily their sacrifice was not needed. But if the State attempts to interfere with the fundamentals of the Christian Creed, then, I believe, we shall see many who will stand firm and will through imprisonment and suffering—and, if need be, death—renew the glorious traditions of the martyrs of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Japan.

C. K. Sansbury.

# The Weight of Glory[1]

Rev. ii, 26, 28: "And he that overcometh, I will give him the morning star."

If you asked twenty good men to-day what they thought the highest of the virtues, nineteen of them would reply, Unselfishness. But if you had asked almost any of the great Christians of old he would have replied, Love. You see what has happened? A negative term has been substituted for a positive, and this is of more than philological importance. The negative ideal of Unselfishness carries with it the suggestion not primarily of securing good things for others, but of going without them ourselves, as if our abstinence and not their happiness was the important point. I do not think this is the Christian virtue of Love. The New Testament has lots to say about self-denial, but not about self-denial as an end in itself. We are told to deny ourselves and to take up our crosses in order that we may follow Christ; and nearly every description of what we shall ultimately find if we do so contains an appeal to desire. If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

We must not be troubled by unbelievers when they say that this promise of reward makes the Christian life a mercenary affair. There are different kinds of reward. There is the reward which has no natural connexion with the things you do to earn it, and is quite foreign to the desires that ought to accompany those things. Money is not the natural reward of love; that is why we call a man mercenary if he marries a woman for the sake of her money.

[1] A sermon preached in the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford on Sunday, June 8, 1941.

But marriage is the proper reward for a real lover, and he is not mercenary for desiring it. A general who fights well in order to get a peerage is mercenary; a general who fights for victory is not, victory being the proper reward of battle as marriage is the proper reward of love. The proper rewards are not simply tacked on to the activity for which they are given, but are the activity itself in consummation. There is also a third case, which is more complicated. An enjoyment of Greek poetry is certainly a proper, and not a mercenary, reward for learning Greek; but only those who have reached the stage of enjoying Greek poetry can tell from their own experience that this is so. The schoolboy beginning Greek grammar cannot look forward to his adult enjoyment of Sophocles as a lover looks forward to marriage or a general to victory. He has to begin by working for marks, or to escape punishment, or to please his parents, or, at best, in the hope of a future good which he cannot at present imagine or desire. His position, therefore, bears a certain resemblance to that of the mercenary; the reward he is going to get will, in actual fact, be a natural or proper reward, but he will not know that till he has got it. Of course, he gets it gradually; enjoyment creeps in upon the mere drudgery, and nobody could point to a day or an hour when the one ceased and the other began. But it is just in so far as he approaches the reward that he becomes able to desire it for its own sake; indeed, the power of so desiring it is itself a preliminary reward.

The Christian, in relation to heaven, is in much the same position as this schoolboy. Those who have attained everlasting life in the vision of God doubtless know very well that it is no mere bribe, but the very consummation of their earthly discipleship; but we who have not yet attained it cannot know this in the same way, and cannot even begin to know it at all except by continuing to obey and finding the first reward of our obedience in our increasing power to desire the ultimate reward. Just in proportion as the desire grows, our fear lest it should be a mercenary desire will die away and finally be recognized as an absurdity. But probably this will not, for most of us, happen in a day; poetry replaces grammar, gospel replaces law, longing transforms obedience, as slowly as the tide lifts a grounded ship.

But there is one other important similarity between the

schoolboy and ourselves. If he is an imaginative boy he will, quite probably, be revelling in the English poets and romancers suitable to his age some time before he begins to suspect that Greek grammar is going to lead him to more and more enjoyments of this same sort. He may even be neglecting his Greek to read Shelley and Swinburne in secret. In other words, the desire which Greek is really going to gratify already exists in him and is attached to objects which seem to him quite unconnected with Xenophon and the verbs in -μι. Now, if we are made for heaven, the desire for our proper place will be already in us, but not yet attached to the true object, and will even appear as the rival of that object. And this, I think, is just what we find. No doubt there is one point in which my analogy of the schoolboy breaks down. The English poetry which he reads when he ought to be doing Greek exercises may be just as good as the Greek poetry to which the exercises are leading him, so that in fixing on Shelley instead of journeying on to Æschylus his desire is not embracing a false object. But our case is very different. If a trans-temporal, trans-finite good is our real destiny, then any other good on which our desire fixes must be in some degree fallacious, must bear at best only a symbolical relation to what will truly satisfy.

In speaking of this desire for our own far-off country, which we find in ourselves even now, I feel a certain shyness. I am almost committing an indecency. I am trying to rip open the inconsolable secret in each one of you—the secret which hurts so much that you take your revenge on it by calling it names like Nostalgia and Romanticism and Adolescence; the secret also which pierces with such sweetness that when, in very intimate conversation, the mention of it becomes imminent, we grow awkward and affect to laugh at ourselves; the secret we cannot hide and cannot tell, though we desire to do both. We cannot tell it because it is a desire for something that has never actually appeared in our experience. We cannot hide it because our experience is constantly suggesting it, and we betray ourselves like lovers at the mention of a name. Our commonest expedient is to call it beauty and behave as if that had settled the matter. Wordsworth's expedient was to identify it with certain moments in his own past. But all this is a cheat. If Wordsworth had gone back to those moments in the past, he would not have found the thing

itself, but only the reminder of it; what he remembered would turn out to be itself a remembering. The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not *in* them, it only came *through* them, and what came through them was longing. These things—the beauty, the memory of our own past—are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshippers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited. Do you think I am trying to weave a spell? Perhaps I am; but remember your fairy tales. Spells are used for breaking enchantments as well as for inducing them. And you and I have need of the strongest spell that can be found to wake us from the evil enchantment of worldliness which has been laid upon us for nearly a hundred years. Almost our whole education has been directed to silencing this shy, persistent, inner voice; almost all our modern philosophies have been devised to convince us that the good of man is to be found on this earth. And yet it is a remarkable thing that such philosophies of progress or creative evolution themselves bear reluctant witness to the truth that our real goal is elsewhere. When they want to convince you that earth is your home, notice how they set about it. They begin by trying to persuade you that earth can be made into heaven, thus giving a sop to your sense of exile in earth as it is. Next, they tell you that this fortunate event is still a good way off in the future, thus giving a sop to your knowledge that the fatherland is not here and now. Finally, lest your longing for the transtemporal should awake and spoil the whole affair, they use any rhetoric that comes to hand to keep out of your mind the recollection that even if all the happiness they promised could come to man on earth, yet still each generation would lose it by death, including the last generation of all, and the whole story would be nothing, not even a story, for ever and ever. Hence all the nonsense that Mr Shaw puts into the final speech of Lilith, and Bergson's remark that the *élan vital* is capable of surmounting all obstacles, perhaps even death —as if we could believe that any social or biological development on this planet will delay the senility of the sun or reverse the second law of thermodynamics!

Do what they will, then, we remain conscious of a desire which no natural happiness will satisfy. But is there any reason to suppose that the universe offers any satisfaction to it? "Nor does the being hungry prove that we have bread." But I think it may be urged this misses the point. A man's physical hunger does not prove that that man will get any bread; he may die of starvation on a raft in the Atlantic. But surely a man's hunger does prove that he comes of a race which repairs its body by eating and inhabits a world where eatable substances exist. In the same way, though I do not believe (I wish I did) that my desire for Paradise proves that I shall enjoy it, I think it a pretty good indication that such a place exists and that some men will. A man may love a woman and not win her; but it would be very odd if the phenomenon called "falling in love" occurred in a sexless world.

Here, then, is the desire, still wandering and uncertain of its object and still largely unable to see that object in the direction where it really lies. Our sacred books give us some account of the object. It is, of course, a symbolical account. Heaven is, by definition, outside our experience, but all intelligible descriptions must be of things within our experience. The scriptural picture of heaven is therefore just as symbolical as the picture our desire, unaided, invents for itself; heaven is not really full of jewelry any more than it is really the beauty of nature, or a fine piece of music. The difference is that the scriptural imagery has authority. It comes to us from writers who were closer to God than we, and it has stood the test of Christian experience down the centuries. The natural appeal of this authoritative imagery is to me, at first, very small. At first sight it chills, rather than awakes, my desire. And that is just what I ought to expect. If Christianity can tell me no more of the far-off land than my own temperament led me to surmise already, then Christianity would be no higher than myself. If it has more to give me, I must expect it to be less immediately attractive than "my own stuff". Sophocles at first seems dull and cold to the boy who has only reached Shelley. If our religion is something objective, then we must never avert our eyes from those elements in it which seem puzzling or repellent; for it will be precisely the puzzling or the repellent which conceals what we do not yet know and need to know.

The promises of Scripture may very roughly be reduced

to five heads. It is promised, firstly, that we shall be with Christ; secondly, that we shall be like Him; thirdly, with an enormous wealth of imagery, that we shall have " glory "; fourthly, that we shall, in some sense, be fed or feasted or entertained; and, finally, that we shall have some sort of official position in the universe—ruling cities, judging angels, being pillars of God's temple. The first question I ask about these promises is: " Why any of them except the first ?" Can anything be added to conception of being with Christ ? For it must be true, as an old writer says, that he who has God and everything else has no more than he who has God only. I think the answer turns again on the nature of symbols. For though it may escape our notice at first glance, yet it is true that any conception of being with Christ which most of us can now form will be not very much less symbolical than the other promises; for it will smuggle in ideas of proximity in space and loving conversation as we now understand conversation, and it will probably concentrate on the humanity of Christ to the exclusion of His deity. And, in fact, we find that those Christians who attend solely to this first promise always do fill it up with very earthly imagery indeed—in fact, with hymeneal or erotic imagery. I am not for a moment condemning such imagery. I heartily wish I could enter into it more deeply than I do, and pray that I yet shall. But my point is that this also is only a symbol, like the reality in some respects, but unlike it in others, and therefore needs correction from the different symbols in the other promises. The variation of the promises does not mean that anything other than God will be our ultimate bliss; but because God is more than a Person, and lest we should imagine the joy of His presence too exclusively in terms of our present poor experience of personal love, with all its narrowness and strain and monotony, a dozen changing images, correcting and relieving each other, are supplied.

I turn next to the idea of glory. There is no getting away from the fact that this idea is very prominent in the New Testament and in early Christian writings. Salvation is constantly associated with palms, crowns, white robes, thrones, and splendour like the sun and stars. All this makes no immediate appeal to me at all, and in that respect I fancy I am a typical modern. Glory suggests two ideas to me, of which one seems wicked and the other ridiculous. Either glory means to me fame, or it means luminosity.

As for the first, since to be famous means to be better known than other people, the desire for fame appears to me as a competitive passion and therefore of hell rather than heaven. As for the second, who wishes to become a kind of living electric light bulb?

When I began to look into this matter I was shocked to find such different Christians as Milton, Johnson and Thomas Aquinas taking heavenly glory quite frankly in the sense of fame or good report. But not fame conferred by our fellow creatures—fame with God, approval or (I might say) " appreciation " by God. And then, when I had thought it over, I saw that this view was scriptural; nothing can eliminate from the parable the divine *accolade*, " Well done, thou good and faithful servant." With that, a good deal of what I had been thinking all my life fell down like a house of cards. I suddenly remembered that no one can enter heaven except as a child; and nothing is so obvious in a child—not in a conceited child, but in a good child—as its great and undisguised pleasure in being praised. Not only in a child, either, but even in a dog or a horse. Apparently what I had mistaken for humility had, all these years, prevented me from understanding what is in fact the humblest, the most childlike, the most creaturely of pleasures—nay, the specific pleasure of the inferior: the pleasure of a beast before men, a child before its father, a pupil before his teacher, a creature before its Creator. I am not forgetting how horribly this most innocent desire is parodied in our human ambitions, or how very quickly, in my own experience, the lawful pleasure of praise from those whom it was my duty to please turns into the deadly poison of self-admiration. But I thought I could detect a moment—a very, very short moment—before this happened, during which the satisfaction of having pleased those whom I rightly loved and rightly feared was pure. And that is enough to raise our thoughts to what may happen when the redeemed soul, beyond all hope and nearly beyond belief, learns at last that she has pleased Him whom she was created to please. There will be no room for vanity then. She will be free from the miserable illusion that it is her doing. With no taint of what we should now call self-approval she will most innocently rejoice in the thing that God has made her to be, and the moment which heals her old inferiority complex for ever will also drown her pride deeper than Prospero's book. Perfect humility dispenses

with modesty. If God is satisfied with the work, the work may be satisfied with itself; "it is not for her to bandy compliments with her Sovereign." I can imagine someone saying that he dislikes my idea of heaven as a place where we are patted on the back. But proud misunderstanding is behind that dislike. In the end that Face which is the delight or the terror of the universe must be turned upon each of us either with one expression or with the other, either conferring glory inexpressible or inflicting shame that can never be cured or disguised. I read in a periodical the other day that the fundamental thing is how we think of God. By God Himself, it is not! How God thinks of us is not only more important, but infinitely more important. Indeed, how we think of Him is of no importance except in so far as it is related to how He thinks of us. It is written that we shall "stand before" Him, shall appear, shall be inspected. The promise of glory is the promise, almost incredible and only possible by the work of Christ, that some of us, that any of us who really chooses, shall actually survive that examination, shall find approval, shall please God. To please God . . . to be a real ingredient in the divine happiness . . . to be loved by God, not merely pitied, but delighted in as an artist delights in his work or a father in a son—it seems impossible, a weight or burden of glory which our thoughts can hardly sustain. But so it is.

And now notice what is happening. If I had rejected the authoritative and scriptural image of glory and stuck obstinately to the vague desire which was, at the outset, my only pointer to heaven, I could have seen no connexion at all between that desire and the Christian promise. But now, having followed up what seemed puzzling and repellent in the sacred books, I find to my great surprise, looking back, that the connexion is perfectly clear. Glory, as Christianity teaches me to hope for it, turns out to satisfy my original desire and indeed to reveal an element in that desire which I had not noticed. By ceasing for a moment to consider my own wants I have begun to learn better what I really wanted. When I attempted, a few minutes ago, to describe our spiritual longings, I was omitting one of their most curious characteristics. We usually notice it just as the moment of vision dies away, as the music ends or as the landscape loses the celestial light. What we feel then has been well described by Keats as "the journey homeward to habitual self." You know

what I mean. For a few minutes we have had the illusion of belonging to that world. Now we wake to find that it is no such thing. We have been mere spectators. Beauty has smiled, but not to welcome us; her face was turned in our direction, but not to see us. We have not been accepted, welcomed, or taken into the dance. We may go when we please, we may stay if we can: "Nobody marks us." A scientist may reply that since most of the things we call beautiful are inanimate, it is not very surprising that they take no notice of us. That, of course, is true. It is not the physical objects that I am speaking of, but that indescribable something of which they become for a moment the messengers. And part of the bitterness which mixes with the sweetness of that message is due to the fact that it so seldom seems to be a message intended for us, but rather something we have overheard. By bitterness I mean pain, not resentment. We should hardly dare to ask that any notice be taken of ourselves. But we pine. The sense that in this universe we are treated as strangers, the longing to be acknowledged, to meet with some response, to bridge some chasm that yawns between us and reality, is part of our inconsolable secret. And surely, from this point of view, the promise of glory, in the sense described, becomes highly relevant to our deep desire. For glory meant good report with God, acceptance by God, response, acknowledgment, and welcome into the heart of things. The door on which we have been knocking all our lives will open at last.

Perhaps it seems rather crude to describe glory as the fact of being "noticed" by God. But this is almost the language of the New Testament. St Paul promises to those who love God not, as we should expect, that they will know Him, but that they will be known by Him (1 Cor. viii, 3). It is a strange promise. Does not God know all things at all times? But it is dreadfully re-echoed in another passage of the New Testament. There we are warned that it may happen to any one of us to appear at last before the face of God and hear only the appalling words: "I never knew you. Depart from Me." In some sense, as dark to the intellect as it is unendurable to the feelings, we can be both banished from the presence of Him who is present everywhere and erased from the knowledge of Him who knows all. We can be left utterly and absolutely *outside*—repelled, exiled, estranged, finally and unspeakably ignored. On the other hand, we can be called in, welcomed, received, acknow-

ledged. We walk every day on the razor edge between these two incredible possibilities. Apparently, then, our lifelong nostalgia, our longing to be reunited with something in the universe from which we now feel cut off, to be on the inside of some door which we have always seen from the outside, is no mere neurotic fancy, but the truest index of our real situation. And to be at last summoned inside would be both glory and honour beyond all our merits and also the healing of that old ache.

And this brings me to the other sense of glory—glory as brightness, splendour, luminosity. We are to shine as the sun, we are to be given the Morning Star. I think I begin to see what it means. In one way, of course, God has given us the Morning Star already: you can go and enjoy the gift any fine morning if you get up early enough. What more, you may ask, do we want? Ah, but we want so much more—something the books on æsthetics take little notice of. But the poets and the mythologies know all about it. We do not want merely to *see* beauty, though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words—to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. That is why we have peopled air and earth and water with gods and goddesses and nymphs and elves—that, though we cannot, yet these projections can, enjoy in themselves that beauty, grace, and power of which Nature is the image. That is why the poets tell us such lovely falsehoods. They talk as if the west wind could really sweep into a human soul; but it can't. They tell us that "beauty born of murmuring sound" will pass into a human face; but it won't. Or not yet. For if we take the imagery of Scripture seriously, if we believe that God will one day *give* us the Morning Star and cause us to *put on* the splendour of the sun, then we may surmise that both the ancient myths and the modern poetry, so false as history, may be very near the truth as prophecy. At present we are on the outside of the world, the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendours we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so. Some day, God willing, we shall get *in*. When human souls have become as perfect in voluntary obedience as the inanimate creation is in its

lifeless obedience, then they will put on its glory, or rather that greater glory of which Nature is only the first sketch. For you must not think that I am putting forward any heathen fancy of being absorbed into Nature. Nature is mortal; we shall outlive her. When all the suns and nebulæ have passed away, each one of you will still be alive. Nature is only the image, the symbol; but it is the symbol Scripture invites me to use. We are summoned to pass in through Nature, beyond her, into that splendour which she fitfully reflects.

And in there, in beyond Nature, we shall eat of the tree of life. At present, if we are reborn in Christ, the spirit in us lives directly on God; but the mind, and still more the body, receives life from Him at a thousand removes—through our ancestors, through our food, through the elements. The faint, far-off results of those energies which God's creative rapture implanted in matter when He made the worlds are what we now call physical pleasures; and even thus filtered, they are too much for our present management. What would it be to taste at the fountain-head that stream of which even these lower reaches prove so intoxicating? Yet that, I believe, is what lies before us. The whole man is to drink joy from the fountain of joy. As St Augustine said, the rapture of the saved soul will " flow over " into the glorified body. In the light of our present specialized and depraved appetites we cannot imagine this *torrens voluptatis*, and I warn everyone most seriously not to try. But it must be mentioned, to drive out thoughts even more misleading —thoughts that what is saved is a mere ghost, or that the risen body lives in numb insensibility. The body was made for the Lord, and these dismal fancies are wide of the mark.

Meanwhile, the cross comes before the crown and to-morrow is a Monday morning. A cleft has opened in the pitiless walls of the world, and we are invited to follow our great Captain inside. The following Him is, of course, the essential point. That being so, it may be asked what practical use there is in the speculations which I have been indulging. I can think of at least one such use. It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory hereafter; it is hardly possible for him to think too often or too deeply about that of his neighbour. The load, or weight, or burden of my neighbour's glory should be laid daily on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it and the backs of the proud will be broken. It

is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption which you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no *ordinary* people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours. This does not mean that we are to be perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment must be of that kind (and it is, in fact, the merriest kind) which exists between people who have, from the outset, taken each other seriously —no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption. And our charity must be a real and costly love, with deep feeling for the sins in spite of which we love the sinner—no mere tolerance or indulgence which parodies love as flippancy parodies merriment. Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbour he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ *vere latitat*— the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden.

C. S. Lewis.

## Problems of a Country Parson

Not a few town-bred and town-trained priests have, like the late Canon Hubbard,[1] found themselves unexpectedly transformed by the conditions of war-time into country parsons. Another, who has shared his experience, ventures to offer here the first-fruits of some early comparison between the work of a priest in town and country districts, and of a little reflection thereon. Canon Hubbard in his article developed one particular point—that of training for

[1] See Theology (July, 1941), "The Training of the Village Priest."

country work—which deserves the Church's careful consideration. But the question goes much deeper. It needs to be recognized far more fully than at present that real differences exist between town and country work which require examination. It is those differences which account for the apparent failure or unhappiness of many town priests transferred late in their ministry to a country sphere. It is not their fault. The stark numerical fact persists that the vast majority of English clergy begin their ministry as town curates and end up, through the mere preponderance of country livings, as country Vicars or Rectors. We receive our training in one set of conditions, and are required, at a more or less unadaptable age, to transfer its exercise to a very different set. Moreover, town training is in really *un*natural conditions of life—the huge urban conglomerations of industrial England—and country work amid the natural.

Let us begin by trying to define a " country " parish. Now country parishes do differ quite extraordinarily one from another, and this needs emphasis. It is not only a question of population, whether you have 200 or 2,000 souls; indeed, that is comparatively a minor matter. It is a question also of geography: Is the parish one with a large nucleus, or one of scattered hamlets or even of isolated farmsteads ? Three adjacent Sussex parishes may illustrate. The writer's has 2,000 to 3,000 people with a well-marked nucleus and one church at the centre. His neighbour, with an acreage and population about the same, has five places of worship in roughly as many centres. A third consists almost entirely of scattered farms, with a parish church near nothing. History counts, too. For six months at the beginning of the war it fell to the writer to serve the parish of a large and well-managed estate, under the care and control of a long-established family. In his present parish there is no squire nor anyone remotely approaching or claiming that position, nor any ancient family that has ever done so. Such history will leave its mark on the character of people and village. So, too, will its ecclesiastical story. Has it been well served by good parsons, or neglected by bad or absentee ones ? Has it had a good tradition of church-going, or (for some reason or other) a bad one ? Not least important, is it mainly " Church," or are there strong denominational divisions between Church and Chapel with two or three or half a dozen rival congregations ?

But when one has said all that about the variety of country parishes, there still remains a deeper truth, common to them all, that a country parish (and this would be my criterion of a " country " parish as opposed to suburb or town) remains even to-day a *community*. The lads and girls of a tiny place may go a few of them to school, or to work in shops, in the neighbouring market town; from the larger village a proportion may go daily to serve in factories or shops or offices in the towns nearby. But they come home, not to a street or a suburb, but to a place with some real consciousness of itself and life of its own. Even in a very scattered parish there is still a sense of the parish. (It has been noted that this may be partly due to the significant fact that the parish remains a unit of local government.) And I should maintain that this survival of a sense of the community (weakened though it undeniably is of more recent years) is the cardinal factor in the life of the country as opposed to the suburb and the town, and therefore sets the country priest with his context for good and for evil, for opportunity as well as for " problems."

Mr T. S. Eliot, in a paper read last year at the Oxford School of Sociology, and printed in the journal *Christendom* last December, draws attention to the traditional connexion of life and of the Church with the soil—a connexion represented till the other year by tithes and by the possession of glebe. Tithes in any direct form have gone, and in present circumstances their commutation, spiritually if not financially, is probably gain rather than loss. But (to quote Mr Eliot) " it meant a church materially dependent, like the people surrounding it, upon the natural resources of the neighbourhood and the chances of the harvest, a reciprocal tie between the Church and the people which drew no distinction between churchgoers and the negligent, between personal belief and unbelief, a tie which was part of the structure of society and which no individual and no one generation was free to break." Glebe, too, has all but gone, except so far as it is still represented by the customary acres of garden round the country rectory. But as long as tithe and glebe remained, they bound the parson into the common life of the parish, from which he can now be as detached as any new villa-dweller or retired townsman who buys a little cottage and settles down to be " in " the country but not " of " it. I imagine few clergy now have any hankering desire to play at being farmers, as no doubt

many of their predecessors were. (In the seventeenth century a barn is recorded as a doubtless important item of the vicarage buildings in this parish.) But (this is the point) they acquired at once a status in the community, a common ground with the people, and a position by virtue of it. It may be said—I suppose rightly, though I am not so sure as when I was a town parson—that to be a farmer is not a parson's job. But what exactly is a parson's job in the country? That is our first "problem." It is easy to say that a priest's job is the same all the world over. Is it? Is it precisely the same as in a town parish? In the country the parson is inevitably part of a *community*. In a town parish he is not, for his parish is a purely arbitrary section of streets cut off in recent years to be a more or less convenient division for ecclesiastical purposes. Many town parishes can be satisfactorily worked by incumbents living outside of them. One cannot imagine a country priest living satisfactorily outside his own parish. (That is the principal weakness of the union of benefices.) The town priest has his pastoral duty to the individual souls of his parishioners, and to the building up of a spiritual fellowship round the church; he has a wider civic duty to the whole city of which his parish is a part. But in the fewest possible cases does a town parish, as such, correspond either to a natural or historical community. In a village the two coincide. Where does the parson's spiritual duty end and his civic duty begin? He is not merely the pastor of individual souls, or the chaplain of a congregation. He is still, in a diminished degree, no doubt, but a degree far higher than any town priest except the Vicar of the parish church of a large town, the *persona*, a figure in the community representing the "spiritual" in relation to that whole community. And this is recognized by Nonconformists as well as Churchfolk. He has a part to play in that life, *even* the so-called "secular" side of it. He may be a member of the Parish Council, the attenuated remnant of local government left to the villages, but none the less not an unimportant body locally. He will probably be Patron or President of Cricket and Football Clubs and Scouts and Flower Shows. He will most likely take a share, often an important and responsible share, in directing the schools; in a very large number of cases will find himself Correspondent and Chairman of Managers of a specifically Church school involving a considerable amount of business.

All that will take a lot of time. Is it rightly spent on these "secular" duties?

A town parson may have little or none of these—none at all as regards his own parish. If he does it will only be because he wishes to do so, and then on a wider scale than his own parish and district. That has its own value, but is a different matter, for in the country one's fellows in these affairs are the same over whose souls one is set spiritually, and members of the single parish-village community. To pursue this point a little further, it means that one's shopkeepers and workmen are one's own people—a double relationship which may incidentally provide its own problems!

The working places of one's people, too, are largely within the parish. How many of a town priest's people work in the parish? How many, therefore, can he ever see in their working surroundings, or know anything of those surroundings, or indeed find at any time of day except out of working hours? The joy of a country parson's life is that he can find and meet on his rounds, not the women only in their homes, but his own children in his own schools, his lads and men (most elusive of souls!) at their work in the bakery or forge, behind the counter, on the soil, behind the plough, on the tractor, tending the pigs, milking cows, picking sprouts or up the apple tree. For this reason, if for no other, that wise document, the *Winchester Report on the Church in Country Parishes*, is right in saying the country parson in going about his parish ought "to walk as His Master walked." And I know from experience that is true. You meet your people about their work, and they are your people.

But, it may be asked, how is all this related to one's priestly work, to the cure of souls? That is indeed the problem. Granted a community, how to turn that, or help to turn it, into the community of the city of God. How to turn (I borrow this phrase from a fellow country parson facing early in his ministerial life these problems) "good will into God's will"—general friendliness, which may and often does exist, into conversion?

For the problem is very different from that of a town. In the town, where there is little sense of community in the rectangle called St X's parish, the priest can seek to "call out" a community, an *ἐκ-κλησία*, the Church, to form a self-conscious community on a spiritual basis, *where*

*no community is.* Its basis is precisely that it differs from "the world" around. In the country there is a community existing, a community based on natural things—the soil and common life and proximity and interdependence. How to make *that* the Church? Can we do so? Or must we ignore the natural community in order to create the spiritual? Is it another form of the old problem whether Grace completes Nature, or is of another and different order altogether?

Anyhow, there is, in a village, not only a sense of the natural community, but something also of the spiritual, or at least the parochial, the ecclesiastical, "the parish" centring round "the parish church" and round the *persona*, the Rector or Vicar. In the country, church, parish, parson count, even if attendance at church or sitting under parson are not noticeably more frequent than in town. (But that is not quite true and we will come back to it.) A baptism, a marriage, a funeral, a festival—especially harvest, the country festival, of course, *par excellence*—will bring out far more of that community spirit as centred round the parish church than ever in a town. And the villager is conscious of, and proud of, his parish church, even if he enters it seldom. It is his. Coming newly to a parish, a priest becomes aware of this. Vicars come and Vicars go; the parish goes on. In that sense, though there is an opposite truth (to which I will refer later), the personality of an individual Vicar counts far less in the country. A new Vicar is not expected or desired to take a new line, or give a lead, not only because he is a newcomer (and remains so for a long time), but because the parish has a long and strong life of its own to which individual priests are incidental. (Church life in this village has a history of 1,200 years; few town parishes have a tenth of that!) So it comes to pass that if the people don't like their present parson, or disapprove of his ways, they can stay away from church. But they have seen five or six Vicars, and shall see this one out in time. Each Vicar is only a passing phase in the life of the parish and community.

Now this same fact of the sense of community provides the country parson both with his special opportunities and with his own problems. For clearly such a situation spells conservatism. And every townsman knows that "country folk are behind the times." (Thank God they are in many

ways, we reply !) And the problem is how to keep the good in it, the responsibility, the sense of " belonging," the holding fast to what they know and appreciate, and yet to lead them on to fresh fields of experience. Sometimes the chain of tradition seems too strong to break at any point. Yet changes have come, down the generations; the church, the services, church life, ways of worship have altered since, say, a hundred years ago. The evening service was a novelty; the cross or candles or flowers on the altar; the restored church; even Hymns Ancient and Modern, its tunes and old favourites, were daring innovations once !

And if there has not been stagnation, there must have come moments when a wise and tactful priest has seen an opportunity and used it; or an unwise one has made a wrong move, or a right move in a wrong way, and left his successors for a generation to recover from it. The priest, then (and he himself is his most immediate problem), must be prepared to go slowly, to be humble, ready to learn, prepared not to impose himself and his own ideas. His danger, the other side of his personal problem, is to remain acquiescing in things as they are, merely to swim with the current of custom, sceptical of the value of trying any new methods, despairing of any change. I need not say more here of the problems of his own spiritual and intellectual life, of which Canon Hubbard has already written. If he has less stimulus to study and prayer, he should have more time; if he has fewer distractions, he has also fewer companions.

But something should be added about the country priest and individual souls. His special problems here are largely from the same source and of the same kind as his other problems. J. H. Skrine, in that classic study of the country priest's work, *Pastor Ovium*, sums up in the words of " wise old Tom " the reason why the young men of the village—friendly enough to him personally—remain during church-time stubbornly lounging round the green instead of coming into church: " What one do, they all does "; and consistently: " what one don't, they all doesn't." That sheep-like quality is not unknown in towns ! In the country it is far stronger. Town life, just because the sense of the community is weaker, makes possible something more of individual decision and independence. The very strength of community in the village makes individual action harder; everyone knows about every-

one else, and everyone sees. Think what that means in the matter, say, of coming to Confession, or even of more frequent Communion than has been thought suitable. If there is a custom against church-going, it may need a miracle or a saint—not, I think, in the country a Chrysostom —to alter the custom. The countryman, too, is by nature reserved and reticent, which by no means implies being stupid or unobservant. It is hard for the priest—at any rate, perhaps for a long time—to feel he knows anything spiritually about his people as individuals, what they need, and how he can help them. Yet he is in closer touch with more of his people just because they are fewer, and knows them or should know them on more sides of their life than the town parson. And from that point of view the personality of the country priest (conversely to what I said above) should count more than in the town. Perhaps one should add, if he stays long enough. For he has to be prepared for slow progress. And always he must remember that if standards of Church life are not what he would wish to see, these souls are (as I heard a good priest say once) " what the Church—the Church in the past—has made them." It means that any progress in religious habit must be slow; that in instructing Confirmation candidates and offering them fresh ideals one must remember that the boys and girls will find little backing in their homes, not because (as so often in the towns) those homes are irreligious, but because such habits are new. The priest often needs to ask himself: What ought one to *expect*, *e.g.*, in the matter of church-going, or of frequency of Communion, or of Bible-reading, or of the age for Confirmation, *given their background and circumstances?* It is a maxim of good teaching that one must start always from where the pupil is, not to say also " and at the pupils' speed."

Further, if this principle of " doing as they all do " sometimes works against the priest, the contrary is also true. The number of communicants on ordinary Sundays is indeed lamentably few in the really rural parish. (I wonder if it will be true to say that in such matters the country is a generation behind the towns?) But a festival is a different thing. The " three times a year " Communion minimum of the Prayer Book rubric has some real hold, and Christmas, Easter, perhaps Whitsuntide, Harvest, will often bring to the altar numbers which *in proportion* few town parishes can emulate, or would know what to do with if they came.

Seventy communicants on Easter Day (including a few strangers) out of a population of 300—I quote an actual figure—is a proportion which in a town parish of 6,000 would mean 1,400 Easter communicants. Few town parishes boast that. In the same parish I calculated that of the eighty houses in the parish (all of which the parson could visit personally beforehand with notices of the festival services), all but half were represented at least by a child at some service that same Easter Day.

There are many problems of the country which this article has made no pretence to discuss. One question most certainly needs enquiry by those capable of doing so: What is the real religion of the true countryman? Is it, has it ever been, in England or elsewhere, Christianity? or is not the Christianity only a veneer, Protestant or Catholic alike, over the religion or superstitions of the soil, which is *paganism*—the religion of the *pagus*, or the countryside—all the world over and down the centuries? Christianity began its career and rooted itself among the populations of the towns of Asia Minor and the Mediterranean world. Has it ever really driven out the gods of the countryside and the countryman? If the countryman has a sense of God, of the Divine, of a Providence, of something beyond himself, with which dimly he is in touch as he works with Nature—something which the machine-worker and tin-nourished dweller in the towns has not got—how far does that take him towards the religion of Christ Incarnate, Redeeming, Indwelling by His Spirit?

But there are two or three practical points which I should wish to emphasize in closing.

1. First is the plea that the difference between town and country work should be recognized. A country priest has different duties, needs a different approach, may well require different methods from those of his town brother. Every organization that a well-run town parish possesses is not necessarily useful or desirable in a village. Ways of worship which may be regarded as normal in a town (even so uncontroversial a matter as the singing of the Psalms) are not necessarily suited for the country. Even what in a firmly-knit town congregation may almost be considered a principle—*e.g.*, the restriction of clubs or Scout and Guide troops to Church members—may be wrong in the conditions of a country village community. The recognition of such differences will enforce Canon Hubbard's plea for the

fostering and training of vocations for country work. It implies that more curates should be trained in the country, and that it should not be a matter for apology if an active and capable ordinand is sent thither instead of into some huge overgrown town parish. So also " the countryside needs more young priests among its incumbents." Why not, as has been suggested, as the scene of a man's first incumbency, while he is still fresh and adaptable? This is all part of the question, which the Church must face, of the best use of her (doubtless inadequate) man power.

2. On that topic there is this to be remembered. To starve the country parishes is not in the best interests of the town parishes themselves. A young Army Chaplain working mostly among soldiers from London told me the other day of his amazement at their sheer ignorance of the Christian religion. That is not the fault of the London clergy. But they have two terrible handicaps in the vastness of their task, and in the unnaturalness of town conditions of life. The country priest has neither of these; his work, with all its problems, is *compassable*. It ought not to be possible for any country dweller to be ignorant of his parish church; or without some knowledge—through Church school or Sunday School—of the Church of God and of the Christian religion; or to be able to say " he has never spoken to a parson "![1]

Further, the life of the country is based, as I remarked earlier, on the natural things—the earth, Nature, the family, the small community of neighbours. There is this truth in the proverb that " God made the country and man made the town." Perhaps a saner post-war England will see that and try to plan accordingly. Perhaps " the Church " (whose officials, alas, are so largely town-bred and urban-minded) ought to show that such " return to the land " has her active encouragement and support, and that, from wider reasons of citizenship, as well as because the strength of the Church is still to a great extent in the villages.

3. Anyway, I want to see the country parishes and country parsons with their " tails up." We should not apologize for being " only country parsons," or belittle our job and allow it to be regarded as inferior. We, in the country, have our problems, but we do not ask for the pity of our town brethren. I think rather we should extend our pity to them, imprisoned in the town, and with jobs often

[1] Evidence to this effect from a naval chaplain was quoted in the *Church Times* recently for the encouragement of the country clergy.

almost hopeless and impossible. But we ask for their sympathy and understanding and prayers before they, too, come and join us !

HENRY DE CANDOLE.

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## The Homilies

### I

THE suggestion was made recently from the pulpit of St Paul's Cathedral that the Homilies should be rescued from neglect and accorded a measure of study. They are never heard in church. The only time the present writer has ever heard one read was on a liner, the captain of which conducted morning service (though a priest was present) and read the Homily against Adultery !

Some of the Homilies are said to have been written by Bishop Jewel, but the origin of most of them is shrouded in anonymity. They were issued by the authority of the State, the preface stating that " the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty . . . caused a Book of Homilies . . . to be printed anew," the former edition having been put out in the reign of Edward VI. The present collection, containing thirty-three sermons, appeared in 1562. It is referred to in Article XXXV, where the titles of the sermons are enumerated, as containing a godly and wholesome doctrine. Only the second set, containing twenty-one discourses, is mentioned by name, the earlier book being doubtless assumed to be already familiar.

To come straight to the point of this paper, it is suggested that these Homilies, if they were ever necessary, are so no longer; that they have been quietly ignored by all schools of thought; that they are utterly unsuited to the present day, being wordy and diffuse; that their doctrine is presented in a manner which betrays a marked lack of proportion; that they were enjoined by the State and not by the Church; and that steps should be taken by the Church to get rid of them as soon as may be. It may be true that " all ministers have not the gift of preaching sufficiently to instruct the people," but the idea of putting words into their mouths is abhorrent to our ways of thinking, and when those words are the utterance of the State, we object to such totalitarian methods. Some would question, *e.g.*, the state-

ment in the Homily on Wilful Rebellion, which declares that "it cometh therefore neither by chance nor by fortune (as they term it), nor by the ambition of mortal men and women climbing up of their own accord to dominion, that there be kings and queens, princes and other governors, other men being their subjects; but all kings, queens and other governors are specially appointed by the ordinance of God." We may believe—though it is not always easy—that rulers are appointed by divine permission, but the ordinary man, by no means lacking in loyalty, as the war has shown, will scarcely accept this dictum. Nor will he be persuaded that "rebellion is the greatest of all mischiefs . . . the worst of all vices . . . the whole puddle and sink of all sins against God and man." This, the last of the Homilies, is divided into six parts, concluding with a Thanksgiving for deliverance from "the late rebellion"—*i.e.*, the rebellion of the Northern Earls in 1569. The Homily has ceased to have any but an historical significance and might well be forgotten. Or we may take the Second Part of the Homily on Fasting, which enjoins that practice for the quaint reason that the eating of fish would give support to the people of those towns which are by the sea—*i.e.*, could furnish seamen for the Navy.

The Homilies are couched in a style which would ensure slumber on the part of any congregation. The longest sentence in English, as far as we can discover, occurs in the Homily "On the Right Use of the Church": it contains over 450 words.[1] Despite these cumbrous sentences, the Homily manages to say very little; it is platitudinous and commonplace. The next Homily, "Of the Peril of Idolatry and Superfluous Decking of Churches," shows the cloven hoof of Protestantism; it appeals to the Book of Wisdom, for the Reformers, when it suited them, could appeal to the Apocrypha, against which they commonly excepted. Not only do the writers quote the Deutero-canonical books, but they cite the Fathers, especially St Augustine and St Chrysostom, and must have puzzled their hearers by citations from Fulgentius, Œcumenius, Photius, and other unfamiliar authors. They quote the classics, adducing Alexander the Great, Pericles, Agesilaus and other heroes as examples or warnings.

The theology of the Homilies is utterly alien to Catholic

[1] A sentence in the Homily of Rebellion has 368 words.

standards. Thus the Homily of Repentance, while accepting the customary division of Repentance into Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction, goes out of its way to make an attack on Auricular Confession, though it admits that " they may repair to their learned curate or pastor " if in any grievous trouble of conscience, but a sermon containing such grudging permission is tantamount to an exhortation not to use the sacrament in question.

Again, the Catholic distinction between " latria " and " dulia " is flouted (it is described as " lewd " in the elegant language of the Homily against Peril and Idolatry); Sunday is identified with the Sabbath in the Sermon of the Time and Place of Prayer; the cultus of the Saints is traced to that of Venus, Diana, etc., in the Homily on Idolatry. " Mummish massing " is held up to scorn in the Homily concerning the Sacrament. The Pope is as much an obsession as King Charles' head, and even on Whitsunday the preacher cannot let him alone.

Henry VIII is described as " a faithful and true minister of most famous memory " (" Of good works "), and it is not a little quaint to find the Homily against Adultery deploring " the divorces which nowadays be so accustomed and used by men's private authority." The teaching with regard to the Sacrament of the Altar is seriously defective: " thou needest no man's help, no other sacrifice or oblation, no sacrificing priest, no mass," says the First Part of the Homily concerning the Sacrament. Granted that abuses and distortions had to be corrected, there was no need to deny that the eucharist has a sacrificial character, and that character has always been admitted by the Church of England—*e.g.*, in the Archbishop's reply to the Pope's Bull, *Apostolicæ Curæ*. To say " we must take heed lest of the memory it be made a sacrifice, of a communion it be made a private eating," that is neither Catholic theology nor representative Anglican teaching.

The Second Part of the Homily on Prayer is an attack on the Invocation of Saints, not particularly well marshalled nor convincing. The Third Part attacks Prayer for the Dead on the ground that " the soul of man passing out of the body goeth straightways either to heaven or else to hell, whereof the one needeth no prayer and the other is without redemption." The sermon on Matrimony adopts the view that woman is a frail, inconstant and inferior creature who must be " under covert and obedience of her husband."

Modern sentiment will be equally affronted by the singular Homily against Excess of Apparel, which urges men to keep in the rank of life in which God has placed him and to dress accordingly. "It is the due of the godly magistrate," says the Homily against Peril of Idolatry, "to drive away all spiritual harlots, I mean idols and images, out of suspected places, churches and temples." So successfully do they seem to have converted the churches into bare preaching-houses that the people no longer felt any interest or pride in them. As the Homily on the Place and Time of Prayer remarks, "A woman said to her neighbour, Alas, gossip, what shall we do now at church since all the saints are taken away, since all the goodly sights we were wont to have are gone?" Religion had been colourful and replete with interest, but now, as the Homily on Repairing of Churches admits, "it is a sin and shame to see so many churches so ruinous and so foully decayed almost in every corner." It was Benjamin Disraeli, no favourer of Catholicism, who said in *Sybil*:

> Formerly Religion undertook to satisfy the noble wants of human nature and by its festivals relieved the painful weariness of toil. . . . The Church convened to its solemnities, under its splendid and almost celestial roofs, amid the finest monuments of art that human hands have raised, the whole Christian population. It shared equally among all its prayers, its incense and its music, its sacred instructions. . . . What you call forms and ceremonies represent the divinest instincts of our nature.

The sermon on the Repairing and Keeping Clean of Churches, following upon that which condemns as idolatrous the setting up, painting and decorating of images, etc., is a melancholy comment on the result of iconoclasm.

The language of the Homilies, when it is not turgid and pompous, is offensive and objectionable. "A filthy and stinking pleasure"; "beastly bellyslaves, giving themselves to bibbing and banqueting"; "books in which the devilish schoolmaster, Satan, hath penned lewd lessons"; "a filthy stinking soul, full of covetousness, fornication, drunkenness"—such are some of the flowers of speech liberally sprinkled throughout these Homilies. The stupid legend of "Pope Jone" and other fabrications are solemnly quoted, but despite the forceful adjectives used and comparisons employed, the Homilies are ineffective, even for the end they had in view. As expositions of Scripture they are

ludicrous; as exhortations they are lacking in persuasiveness and devoid of appeal; as explanations they are dull and involved. It is difficult to discover any merit in them, and the assumption of any responsibility for these lamentable productions can reflect no credit on any Church. It is time that official action should be taken to disown them; if printed at all, they should be put forward, not by the Tract Committee of S.P.C.K., but as documents illustrative of the depth to which religion had sunk as the result of the Reformation.

MARCUS DONOVAN.

## II

As the author of the remark which provoked Mr Donovan to write, I propose to explain what I meant. It is apparently true that for about a hundred years the Homilies "have been quietly ignored by all schools of thought," but there is at least one exception to this general indifference to which I am surprised Mr Donovan makes no reference. Eight sermons on the Homilies were included in *Cambridge Sermons* by the late Sir E. C. Hoskyns (published in 1938). That his estimate of their value is contrary to Mr Donovan's may be gathered from the following passage:

> Though the book (of Homilies) is not very easily accessible to you, yet the themes with which it deals are quite elemental, the language in which it is written is almost as classical as that of the English Bible and of the English Book of Common Prayer, and it comes from a period in English history when a large number of English men and women were possessed of a genuine sense for Christian truth—I had almost said, of proper theological insight.—*Op. cit.*, p. 152.

By comparison with Hoskyns' sermons, or indeed with the Book of Homilies itself, Mr Donovan's remarks seem somewhat frivolous, and themselves to betray "a marked lack of proportion." He says that "the theology of the Homilies is utterly alien to Catholic standards."[1] But, as Hoskyns said, the themes of the Homilies are the themes of the Bible, and if these are alien to "Catholic standards," so much the worse for "Catholic standards."

The visible world, men, marriage, babies and the manner in which they come into the world, war, famine, prosperity, success,

[1] The use made of the Homilies by Newman in Tract XC might have suggested a qualification, at least, of this extraordinary opinion.

bread, death, the relation of a man to his neighbours, these are the themes of the Homilies, just as they are the themes of the Bible. . . . Behind all these seemingly fragmentary, episodic occurrences, however, lies the relation of the world to its Maker, the relation of men to God. In this relationship consists the meaning of the world of men and of things. This is the primary and ultimate theme of the Homilies as it is of the Bible.—*Op. cit.*, p. 161.[1]

The theology of the Homilies is biblical through and through, and to that extent Catholic. All that Mr Donovan seems to have an eye for is certain subordinate matters in regard to which the Homilies no doubt reflect the limitations or the peculiar characteristics of the period in which they were composed and set forth. But to fix on these and to ignore the main themes is to trifle.[2]

[1] *Cf.* Dr John Hey (Norrisian Professor at Cambridge, 1780-1795): "I have really a very high opinion of them, and I read them with much pleasure; they seem to me to show strong intellects and fine feelings, a very great insight into the true meaning of Scripture, and a very nice and accurate knowledge of mankind. They abound with fine strokes of eloquence. . . . I find them continually improve upon me; the more I read them, the more I find in them to approve and admire."—*Lectures in Divinity*[2] (1822), iv, 468 *f.* Bishop John Jebb, who certainly was not prejudiced in favour of the Homilies (see p. 291, note 3, *infra*): "They abound in examples of a manly, nervous, unaffected eloquence—solicitous not about words, but things, and often coming home to the heart and conscience with a deep, forcible conviction, much resembling that of the Sacred Scriptures. They show a thorough acquaintance with human nature, and with human life, too, as it existed in the 'olden time.' And, were a young clergyman of vivid parts and a reflecting mind to ask me where he should look for a good model of a plain, popular, and effective way of teaching, I should not scruple sending him to *many parts* of our Homilies."—*Practical Theology* (1830) ii, 307. Dr W. K. Lowther Clarke contributed a Note on the Homilies to THEOLOGY in January, 1933, in the course of which he says: "The style for the most part is admirable. . . . When we are disheartened at reading a political history of the sixteenth century it is a tonic to turn to the vigorous exhortations to true religion, corporate as well as personal, contained in these famous but largely unread Homilies. The century was not so bad as it is the fashion to paint it" (xxvi. 48, 51).

[2] *Cf.* Tract XC (reproducing Tract LXXXII): "The Homilies are subsidiary to the Articles; therefore they are of authority so far as they *bring out* the sense of the Articles, and are not of authority where they do not. . . . Take their table of contents; examine the headings; these surely, taken together, will give the substance of their teaching. Now I hold fully and heartily the doctrine of the Homilies, under every one of these headings: the only points to which I should not accede, nor think myself called upon to accede, would be certain matters, subordinate to the doctrines to which the headings refer—matters not of doctrine, but

It is misleading to say that the Homilies " were enjoined by the State and not by the Church," or that they are " the utterance of the State." It is to read back into the Reformation period modern ideas of Church and State as separate societies. It is to convey the suggestion that Tudor England was a secular State, and that the Homilies were imposed upon the Church by a counterpart to the Ministry of Information. It is true that the two books of Homilies were issued under the royal authority, but the monarch was then an authority within, and not extraneous to, the Church. Moreover, the plan originated in Convocation; and in the case of the former book the truth appears to be almost the reverse of what Mr Donovan implies. For when the bishops had prepared the Homilies, their publication was delayed for about four years owing to the refusal of King Henry VIII to authorize it.[1] They were written by churchmen and for churchmen, and I gather that their origin is not quite so shrouded in anonymity for those who have looked into the matter as it is for Mr Donovan.

In any case, the references to the Homilies in the Book of Common Prayer,[2] in the Ordinal,[3] and in Articles XI and XXXV invest them with as much ecclesiastical authority as anyone would wish to claim for them. As long as those references remain, the clergy ought at least to be acquainted with the Homilies.

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of opinion, as that Rome is the Antichrist; or of historical fact, as that there was a Pope Joan." Dr Lowther Clarke (*loc. cit.*, p. 49) remarks: " It may be surmised that many of the Catholic-minded Churchmen who attended their parish churches in the early years of Elizabeth, and later became the separated Roman Catholic community, would have repudiated mediæval abuses as heartily as the authors of the Homilies."

[1] See J. T. Tomlinson, *The Prayer Book, Articles and Homilies* (1897), pp. 230 *ff.* According to J. Griffiths' Preface to the 1859 Oxford edition of the Homilies (pp. xvii *ff.*) the Second Book of Homilies was submitted to Convocation and received its approbation before being issued under the Queen's authority, though some alterations were introduced between the two events.

[2] " Then shall follow the Sermon, or one of the Homilies already set forth, or hereafter to be set forth, by authority." This rubric was not altered in the revision proposed in 1928.

[3] *The Bishop :* " It appertaineth to the Office of a Deacon . . . to read holy Scriptures and Homilies in the Church. . . . Will you do this gladly and willingly ?" *Answer :* " I will do so, by the help of God." See also Canon 46 (1603).

Every one who subscribes the Articles ought to read them, otherwise he subscribes a blank; he approves a book implicitly, and binds himself to read it, as he may be required, without knowing anything concerning it.[1]

All the standard works on the Articles recognize that the authority of the Homilies is not on the same plane as that of the Book of Common Prayer or of the Articles themselves.

All writers on the subject have agreed, that the kind of assent, which we are here called on to give to them, is general, not specific. We are not expected to express full concurrence with every statement, or every exposition of Holy Scripture contained in them, but merely in the general to approve of them, as a body of sound and orthodox discourses, and well adapted for the times for which they were composed. . . . The Homilies are, in fact, semi-authoritative.[2]

The formal doctrinal teaching of the Church of England is found in the Articles and the Book of Common Prayer; and so far as the Homilies agree with these, and bring out the sense of their teaching, they are authoritative.[3]

I suggest that the Homilies should be rescued from neglect and accorded a measure of study for the following reasons:

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[1] Gilbert (Burnet), Bishop of Sarum, *An Exposition of the XXXIX Articles of the Church of England* (Edn. Oxford, 1819), p. 512. *Cf.* J. Veneer, *An Exposition on the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England*[2] (1730), ii, 688: " 'Tis indeed the duty of all those who are to subscribe to the Articles to peruse them (the Homilies) seriously. The Book of *Homilies* is certainly a very useful Book; and whoever reads it over, will have no occasion to think his labour lost."

[2] E. Harold Browne, *An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles*[4] (1858), p. 777; he adds that " the ' Homily of Salvation ' . . . is of greater authority than the rest, being referred to in Article XI as a fuller exposition of the doctrine there delivered."

[3] Edgar C. S. Gibson, *The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England* (1897), ii, 727. On the other hand, E. J. Bicknell not only dismisses the Homilies with a very brief note, but minimizes even their semi-authority and leaves the impression that no one now need feel obliged to read them. " The Article (XXXV) only claims for them a vague and temporary authority. . . . They came into existence for a special emergency which has now passed away."—*A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles* (1919), p. 403. The most carefully reasoned depreciation of the authority of the Homilies, that I have come across, is by Bishop John Jebb, " The Homilies considered in a Letter," etc. (see his *Practical Theology*, ii, 281-319); this letter arose out of a discussion as to whether the Homilies should be distributed " as catechetical premiums to children " in Ireland !

1. Because they illustrate and supplement[1] the doctrinal teaching of the Church of England contained in the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles, and throw much light on the great theological controversies of the Reformation.

2. Because they show the kind of themes which ought to be the subject of preaching in the Church and ways in which those themes are to be driven home.

3. Because our most authoritative formularies assume that the clergy will be acquainted with the Homilies.

4. Because, unless they are attended to, no one will be moved to decide (*a*) whether they should be disowned (as Mr Donovan desires) or retained with fresh qualifications (for we must all agree that the present situation is unsatisfactory, to say the least), and (*b*) whether it is desirable or not that further Homilies should be set forth.

No one will suggest that the existing Homilies, as a whole or for the most part, are likely ever again to be used for the purpose for which they were originally intended. Just because they applied closely to the condition of the English people at the time when they were composed, they were bound to become in many respects out of date. But, as Hoskyns pointed out, "the making of authoritative Homilies" was not "a peculiar activity of the Church of England in the sixteenth century." There was ample precedent for their provision and use in the Church Catholic.[2] It is worth considering whether present conditions are of such a kind as to make the provision of new homilies, suitable for contemporary use, desirable.

The idea is not a novel one. Archbishop Tillotson "thought that . . . another book of Homilies, which should contain a full and plain account both of the doctrinal and practical parts of the Christian religion, and give a clear explanation of everything relating to our holy faith,

[1] They use conceptions which may be pre-supposed but are not formally mentioned in the Prayer Book and Articles—*e.g.*, "the law of nature"; see *Homilies and Canons* (S.P.C.K., edited by John Griffiths, 1864), pp. 135, 360, 393, 396, 499. See also Tract XC for other examples.

[The S.P.C.K. has published the Homilies since 1864. I am informed that the sale has been about fifty a year of late, but it is thought that this is largely due to the fact that the Canons are bound up with the Homilies. They were reprinted last year, but with so small a sale the publication is not a "business proposition."]

[2] See Hoskyns, *op. cit.*, p. 157; also Hey, *op. cit.*, iv, 457.

or to the conduct of our lives, was necessary chiefly for instruction of the clergy, and might also be a family book for the general use of the nation."[1] A plan was drawn up for a volume of sixty-two homilies—*i.e.*, for all the Sundays in the year and ten for holy days. Some progress was made, and Bishop Burnet wrote five homilies which were subsequently published. "But soon after this they found a spirit of opposition growing so strong, and so much animated and supported, that it was to no purpose to struggle against it at that time."[2] So far as I know, the project has not since been revived, but that is no reason for not reviving it now. For the ensuing period Tillotson's object may be said to have been partly and indirectly achieved through the vogue which his own sermons came to enjoy as models for the parochial clergy.[3]

It will hardly be maintained that the need which Tillotson had in mind does not exist to-day. If a good set of such homilies could be produced, they might meet not with "animated and supported" opposition, but with a warm welcome from both clergy and laity. While there is not now the dearth of licensed preachers that there was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, many of those who are licensed to preach would be the first to admit that the demand for sermons that is made on them is greater than they can reasonably be expected to supply, both as regards quantity and quality. Lay people who attend church to hear sermons complain not infrequently of the quality of what is provided for them, though less often of its quantity. Lay people who do not attend church complain with more show of bitterness, but with less of reason, of the quality of the sermons which they do not hear.

The opinion is commonly advanced that read discourses, whether original or reproduced, are unpopular and ineffective; but I do not think they need be so, if they are *well* read. (The modern increase in the number of people who can read seems to have been accompanied by a decrease in the number of people who can read aloud well; this defect would certainly need to be remedied if the proposal here

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[1] *The Works of Dr John Tillotson with the Life of the Author by Thomas Birch* (1830), i, cclv; see also T. E. S. Clarke and H. C. Foxcroft, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury* (1907), pp. 280 *ff.*

[2] *Ibid.*, i, cclvii.

[3] See Charles Smyth, *The Art of Preaching* (1940), chap. iv, "The Triumph of Tillotson."

made were carried into effect.) But one may doubt whether the prejudice against read discourses is as general as it is alleged to be, when the popularity of broadcast talks is taken into account.

John Hey, after summarizing the reasons for the issue of the Homilies, concluded as follows: " In short, all was either neglect of religion, or confusion about it."[1] A similar conclusion might without difficulty be reached to-day, though from different premises. If the Church of England were able at this time to publish a new book of Homilies, it would give guidance—authoritative or semi-authoritative—to the clergy as to what ought to be the themes of their preaching, and as to how these may be brought to bear upon the life of the nation in the twentieth century. Individual preachers would have less excuse for saying only what is right in their own eyes.[2] The laity would have a standard by which they could judge whether the sermons they hear are in accordance with the living mind of the Church.

Moreover, the quality of sermons would be likely to improve, if their number were reduced and if they were replaced from time to time by a read homily. It is not impossible also that in the near future there will be a serious dearth of licensed preachers; in that event, steps ought to be taken to see that the speech of the Church is still audible throughout the land, and a provision of authorized homilies, which might be used by a lay reader in any congregation, would be of great value.

Indeed, it is not beyond the range of possibilities that the opportunities for normal public worship may be seriously curtailed, and that in some localities the ordinary ministry of the Church will not be regularly available.[3]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, iv, 458.

[2] Conditions are not wanting to-day which might justify the issue of some " Directions concerning Preachers " equivalent to those sent by James I to Archbishop Abbot in 1622. The first of these directed all preachers " under the degree and calling of a bishop or dean " to confine their sermons to such subjects as are " comprehended and warranted in essence, substance, effect, or natural inference within some one of the " XXXIX Articles " or in some of the homilies set forth by authority in the Church of England, not only for a help of the non-preaching, but withal for a pattern and a boundary, as it were, for the preaching ministers." See Edward Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England* (1839), ii, 149.

[3] Archbishop Ullathome's autobiography contains an interesting account of what has been done in such a situation. When he was a boy

The laity of our Church are not at present well prepared to conduct their own worship, and, whatever the future may have in store, it will be an advantage if they are equipped to do so. There is, it is true, no dearth of published sermons of all sorts which might be read where God's people gather together for worship, but there are obvious objections to leaving the choice of what should be read to be made quite arbitrarily and at random. Even if a book of new Homilies could not be composed, it would not be amiss for the Church to make an authorized selection from the great volume of published sermons which is already at its disposal. But the two provisions, so far from being incompatible, would be complementary, and if there should be a revival of family worship in our country (as is much to be desired), they would be of service for that also.

Whether the Church of England is in these days capable of making such a provision for the present and future is another question, but it is a question which those who would have to be responsible for its initiation might do well to consider. If the capacity is lacking, it will hardly do to attribute the lack to the political disturbances or religious confusion of the age (for they are no greater, at least so far as England is concerned, than they were in the sixteenth century); the lack of capacity would be evidence of graver trouble.

ALEC R. VIDLER, O.G.S.

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at Scarborough, the Roman Catholic community had a priest only one Sunday in six weeks.

"On the five intervening Sundays between the sacerdotal visits, it was arranged that the flock should attend chapel morning and afternoon as usual. My father and a Mr Paxton, an Ushaw Church student who had given up the idea of the Ministry, officiated as lectors on alternate days. First the usual prayers before Mass were said aloud, then all in silence read the prayers for Mass in the Garden of the Soul, making a sort of spiritual Communion, and then the lector for the week read one of Archer's Sermons aloud. . . . In the afternoon the psalm prayers were chanted aloud, 'All ye works of the Lord' etc., and Catechism was heard."—*From Cabin Boy to Archbishop* (1941), p. 10.

# MISCELLANEA

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

The Rev. C. K. Sansbury was Professor at the Central Theological College, Tokyo, and Chaplain to the British Embassy, until he had to leave Japan. At the time of writing he was in Canada.

Mr Lewis is Vice-President of Magdalen College, Oxford.

The Rev. Henry de Candole is Vicar of Henfield, Sussex.

The Rev. Marcus Donovan is Vicar of St Agnes, Kennington Park, but his church has been destroyed.

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## REVISED REVIEWS—IX

Quo Vadis? By Henryk Sienkievicz.

*Quo Vadis?* was published in Poland in 1896, the first historical romance of Sienkievicz that was not concerned with his native country, and immediately ran into innumerable editions, being translated into all the European and many of the oriental languages. It penetrated to this country in the opening years of the present century. Since then it has been dramatized, filmed and even turned into an opera; and it has probably been responsible, more than any other book, for the vogue of the historical novel with the large canvas which particularly delights the mind of the imaginative not only by the glamour of the age that it recreates, but also because of those immense possibilities of good and evil, heroism and barbarism, that it awakes in the imaginative reader by a portrayal of these things upon the historical canvas.

At the same time I think that *Quo Vadis?* deserves to be resurrected, and I therefore welcome its appearance in the Everyman Edition with an introduction by Miss Monica Gardner (Dent, 2s. 6d.). If the magnitude of its sales had anything to do with its inclusion, that inclusion was merited a long while ago. Unlike most novels of the Roman Empire, it does not content itself with glamour. True, like other Poles, Sienkievicz possessed a deep and sensitive eye for colour; but he saw in the city of Rome under Nero a good deal more than palaces, aqueducts, temples and the Palatine. To him the whole magnificent spectacle, which he certainly brings to life in chapters that are beautiful as they are sometimes terrible, was rotting with moral disintegration; and was, despite the variegated and imposing structure, morally hollow to the verge of collapse. We who can see the whole history of that Empire in secluded, if not comfortable, retrospect may indeed ask how

it lasted so long—how so vast a structure that was actually toppling in A.D. 64 managed to survive into the fourth century; and those who feel another world cracking up to-day may well pause before they too hastily conclude that the whole thing will vanish in the present crisis! That is the way the world does not behave; and it would, I think, shake the optimism and pessimism of a good many moderns if they were to read *Quo Vadis?* again. It has a powerful message for the world of 1941.

Its characters are admittedly drawn with various degrees of success, in which the most notorious pagans are by a long way the most successful. That of the Emperor Nero—child, monster and mountebank in one—is unforgettable; and the magnificently dissolute Petronius of the *Satyricon* is astonishingly true to life. Chilon, the Greek vagabond and informer who dies the death of a Christian martyr, is convincing in spite of himself at times; and the young tribune convert, Marcus Venicius (whose romance forms the theme of the story), is a difficult and complex character clearly drawn and skilfully handled. The Christian characters, however, are weak and watery or so fiercely fanatical as to be repulsive. Peter and Paul are shadowy and diffusive, though Sienkievicz does manage to instil into the Christian community as a whole a sense of moral and redemptive power that could act as a leaven in the lump.

The Rome of Nero is, I suppose, the most magnificent item that the historical novel could demand—the potentialities are the most immense; and the grand sweep of the *Quo Vadis?* canvas is its most magnetic quality. There are magnificent opportunities for spectacular writing that Sienkievicz explores to the utmost in his portrayal of the life of the imperial palace, its pagan feasts and shameless human exploitations. At the other extremity we have glimpses of squalid misery as it was lived by the slave population, the grinding down of more than half the human inhabitants; and, of course, the Church in the catacombs. The burning of the city and the massacres in the arena afford the author full chance for his undoubted genius for descriptive writing; and there can be small wonder that a period in history which can assemble Nero, Petronius, Peter, Paul, Poppœa and Tigellinus has formed the happy hunting ground of the historical novelist ever since *Quo Vadis?* set the example.

It is curious and psychologically interesting that this gifted Polish patriot, who wrote a famous trilogy to celebrate the martyrdoms and triumphs of his own torn country, should execute with such scholarly exactness a book about such a different age; but Miss Monica Gardner, in an Introduction of quite brilliant insight, suggests that in this, his novel about the Rome of Nero, Sienkievicz was more truly a Pole than in anything else he ever wrote. For Poland, in 1896, was under the heel of a tyrant, as it often has been and is again to-day;

and in the Imperial Rome of the Cæsars he was able to construct (without offending the eye of the Censor) an age and a tyranny of which his countrymen felt the likeness in their own country and their own day. Similarly his Christian Princess Lygia and her faithful servant Ursus were typical of the outraged aristocracy and peasantry of his native land. This device has its dangers and is easily exploited; but when, as in *Quo Vadis ?*, the classical conception of the social state is preserved, the illusion comes off and the device may be forgiven.

There is not much doubt that *Quo Vadis ?* will live for many years to come, even though, on literary grounds, it may be denied any claim to greatness. The reason is, I think, that it deals with the immense problem of good and evil as an historical entity; and by choosing an age in world history when good and evil, in their extremist forms, were made to live side by side in graphic juxtaposition, the author possesses a stage for his drama that has never been surpassed for this particular purpose. Rome was, of course, the centre of that universe in a sense that Rome or London or New York can never be the centre of ours; and all that was done or said or thought in the world of the first century found its centre of gravity (as Tacitus well knew) in the city of Rome. That is what gave *Quo Vadis ?* such a vogue in its own day and that is its charm and its fascination still. It is careful and scholarly, though it has its weak moments; and its power is in its ability to recreate an age in human history as such that has become for too many a happy hunting ground for speculation and even for religious controversy.

Ashley Sampson.

## COMMENT ON LITERARY PERIODICALS

A recent questionnaire sent out by *Horizon*[1] to its readers revealed the interesting fact that the third largest professional group among them, 8 per cent. of the whole, were clergymen, but only one priest answered the questions and only one contributes. This indicates an interest in the indecisions of Gower Street which must be more widespread than might have been supposed, but also, I should think, some scepticism about *Horizon* as a means of clarifying and resolving those indecisions. Too much of its space is given to assessment of the recent past—Proust, Joyce, Mrs Woolf, Barrie, Oscar Wilde at Oxford, the autobiography of Augustus John. Dylan Thomas contributes a long " Ballad of the Long-legged Bait " to the July number, but the analysis of the literary sources of his Surrealist imagery by Henry Treece in the summer number of Tambimuttu's *Poetry*[2] only serves to confirm my impression that he is chasing his own

[1] 6, Selwyn House, Lansdowne Terrace, W.C.1. 1s.
[2] 25, Marchmont Street, W.C.1. 1s.

tail. Auden's monody " At the Grave of Henry James " in the June *Horizon* is another matter. It is better verse than some theological musings of his which he tried to put into a poem for April, and points, like " Atlantis " in the summer number of *Christianity and Society*,[1] to what Reinhold Niebuhr can call " a view of life very intimately related to the viewpoint " of his " Fellowship of Socialist Christians."

What is wrong with *Horizon* was suggested by Michael Roberts in a review of André Maurois' book on France in the May number. The writers there don't realize yet that " the discipline of suffering " is a serious necessity. It is difficult to see in what passes there for creative writing present evidence of the " spiritual renaissance " which " should be in existence . . . by the time Anglo-American war aims have crystallized from the philosophy behind them " (so their July editorial). If it is true that " we cannot get such a spiritual revival until the religious forces and the spiritual humanistic forces come together, as did the Basque priests and the Spanish Republicans, or Bernanos and the French Left " (but how far did they ?), can they do so while the humanists continue to hope for a new Anglo-American world of open spaces where ambitious artists roam about like elephants ? Regionalism, which is also recommended, might provide better conditions for such a fusion, as it did in the Basque country. But any true form of just society

" . . . begins
With free confession of our sins,"

as Auden has it in his *New Year Letter*.

From America comes a useful symposium on the state of literary education, shared between *The Southern Review* and *The Kenyon Review* last year. The January number of *The Kenyon Review*[2] is notable for a discussion of President Hutchins' work in pushing the *philosophia perennis* in Chicago by W. C. Barrett, and a rather perverse analysis of the deterministic element in Eliot's literary criticism by Yvor Winters. President Hutchins also comes up in an encounter in another American literary journal, *Furioso*,[3] between I. A. Richards and an American Christian philosopher, Professor Wilbur Urban, whose *Language and Reality* is also interestingly reviewed in an otherwise rather dull summer issue. It is good that Dr Richards should receive intelligent and understanding philosophic criticism, and his own philosophy seems to grow larger and less arid. *The Partisan Review*[4] is valuable for objective information from London and Paris. Its official Trotskyism does not prevent it from printing

[1] 3041, Broadway, New York. 25 cents.
[2] Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. $2 a year.
[3] Box 452, New Haven Post Office. 30 cents.
[4] 45, Astor Place, New York. $1 a year.

Eliot's " Dry Salvages " and poetry and criticism by Allen Tate and Marianne Moore.

On this side of the Atlantic *Scrutiny*[1] is in danger. I hope that occasional readers will rally to keep it alive until new groups are possible. But a reduction in size would do it no harm at present. What Mrs Leavis has to say about Jane Austen's method is important, but she could have done it as well in one article as in two. And Dr Leavis also goes on too long about Joseph Conrad. Perhaps in present circumstances Denys Thompson's *English in Education*,[2] though more narrowly professional and practical, is doing as useful a work.

Lastly *Townsman*.[3] This is still a lively affair, and the nearest thing we have to intelligent literary preparation for a hard future, not an elephantine one, a future where what culture there is must be rooted in the soil, and, more doubtfully, in the Church. It would be a pity if Mr Duncan, like Dr Leavis, had to shoulder too much of his own burden. But he does get new contributors, non-commissioned officers and clergymen. And his own poetry is always worth a second or a third reading.

George Every, S.S.M.

Kelham.

## STUDIES IN TEXTS

*Behold, there was a great earthquake ; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was as lightning and his raiment white as snow : and for fear of him the watchers did quake, and became as dead men.*

Matt. xxviii, 2-4.

The usual comment is that these verses belong to the latest additions to the First Gospel and are clearly embroiderings of the Markan account. The young man of Mark, arrayed in a white robe, who in Luke becomes " two men (angels) in dazzling apparel," in Matthew is clearly called an angel, the white robe becoming " raiment white as snow." The process by which a natural incident was supernaturalized is clear as daylight.

Without disputing the secondary character of Matthew's addition, let us try if we cannot get more out of the passage than is possible by the usual methods of literary criticism.

It is generally said that, while the Gospels furnish proofs that the Resurrection has taken place—a negative proof is the empty tomb, a positive one is the visions—the actual Resurrection is not described. My suggestion is that these verses do describe the Resurrection, necessarily in symbolical language, which

[1] Deighton Bell and Co., Cambridge. 2s. 6d.
[2] Gresham's School (Holt) at Newquay, Cornwall. 2s.
[3] West Mill, Morwenstowe. 2s.

conveys theological truth and is not meant to be taken of anything perceptible by the senses. The descent of the angel takes place before the arrival of the women. There are no witnesses, and we are justified in treating the verses as a theological insertion, designed to express the faith of the Church in a vivid way.

What was this faith of the Church? Simply that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. In the Acts and the Pauline Epistles, to which we may confine ourselves, two words meaning "raise" or "rise" are used, ἀνίστημι and ἐγείρω. ἀνίστημι occurs six times in the Acts, in a transitive sense, of God's raising Jesus. In an intransitive sense it occurs twice in the Acts (x, 41; xvii, 3), each time in the phrase "rose from the dead" (ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν), which is the verbal form of the common phrase, "the resurrection from the dead": (ἀνάστασις ἐκ νεκρῶν). Only once is it used alone, in 1 Thess. iv, 14, "Jesus died and rose again" (ἀνέστη). The other word (ἐγείρω) is used of God's raising Jesus three times in Acts and twenty-six times in St Paul's Epistles. The natural instinct then was to avoid speaking of Jesus rising from the dead, as by His own power, and to ascribe the act to God. There is a shifting of emphasis in the Creeds, where Jesus is not "raised" but "rises." The Apostolic Fathers go with the New Testament in this matter, Justin Martyr goes with the later usage; see A. E. Burn, *An Introduction to the Creeds*.

Now we come to the text. *The angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it.* I have purposely reverted to the Authorized Version, "the angel of the Lord." The revisers were careful to represent the absence of the article in Greek. But it is not certain they were right. A. T. Robertson explains the use of the article thus: "Whenever the Greek article occurs, the object is certainly definite. When it is not used, the object may or may not be" (*A Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, p. 756). When a noun is the only object of its kind and partakes of the nature of proper names it often dispenses with the article (p. 794). In Matt. i, 20; ii, 13, 19, the "angel of the Lord" appears without an article (ἄγγελος κυρίου), but in i, 24, which ends the first appearance, naturally the article is used. The same usage is found in Luke ii, where in ver. 9 "angel of the Lord" appears, to be referred to in ver. 10 as "*the* angel," just mentioned.

But what is ἄγγελος κυρίου? Surely, as in the Septuagint, the Greek equivalent of the "angel of the Lord," *mălʾāk Yahweh*, of the Old Testament. But this "angel" is a theophany, God manifesting Himself to men. The examples are too numerous to need recounting. It is sufficient to recall Exodus iii, where the angel of the Lord (ἄγγελος κυρίου) who speaks out of the burning bush is equated with God. In many other cases, as here, the Septuagint has no article. Let us follow up this clue, neglecting the appearances of the angel of the Lord connected

with the birth of Christ, which may similarly be taken as theophanies.

St Matthew goes on to describe the angel. *His appearance was as lightning.* This comes from Daniel x, 6, where the seer has a vision of one whose face was as " the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire." On hearing the voice Daniel falls into a deep sleep with his face toward the ground. This figure cannot be an angel in the ordinary sense, for he speaks of Michael coming to help him in the campaign. He is surely the same as " the captain of the host of the Lord " who appears to Joshua and uses the same words as God did out of the burning bush: " Put off thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy " (Joshua v, 14, 15).

Matthew goes on: *his raiment was white as snow.* This again comes from Daniel (vii, 9), where it is applied to the Almighty, the Ancient of Days. *And for fear of him the watchers did quake, and became as dead men,* like Daniel at the theophany, who fell into a deep sleep, prostrate on his face.

God raised Jesus from the dead. A modern writer, wishing to bring this home to his readers, would probably use abstract language. St Matthew, writing as a Jew and largely for Jewish Christians, used the only language at his disposal, that of poetry and symbolism. Neither ancient nor modern writers have words with which to describe the intervention of Almighty God. We may speak of Him in negatives—" who only hath *im*mortality, dwelling in light *un*approachable, whom *no* man hath seen, *nor* can see " (1 Tim. vi, 16), but, if we want to speak positively, can we improve on St Matthew's method ?

My conclusion is that Matthew, alone of the Evangelists, narrates the actual Resurrection, when God intervenes and raises Jesus. The " proofs " follow: " He is not here . . . Come, see the place where the Lord lay." " Behold, Jesus met them."

W. K. Lowther Clarke.

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## A SURVEY OF RECENT AMERICAN ECUMENICAL LITERATURE

As the war and its problems press more and more closely upon us we are coming to see, as perhaps never before in Christian history, the urgent practical necessity of Christian reunion and of co-operation as a preliminary to it. The Church of Rome—as witness almost every recent issue of the *Catholic Herald* and the activities of the Sword of the Spirit Movement —has for once been giving a true lead in this matter.

What we are just now coming to realize in England has long been a matter of practical Church politics in America, and America undoubtedly has much to teach us in the practical

application of the co-operative principle in Church life. The United States is predominantly a Protestant nation.[1] But there are in the States 213 denominations of varying size, not including the "freak" religions. Consequently, Americans see the problem of reunion largely as one of effective Protestant co-operation, and to this end was formed, in 1908, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America which constitutes a "federal interchurch system . . . representing the great bulk of Protestants in the United States, which increasingly serves as a correlating centre for co-operation."[2]

The work done in America by the Federal Council is of paramount importance. In particular it has made possible, by the incentive it has given to local co-operation and federation in a large number of cases, the application of the typical American "case-study" method to the review of the actual field of union.

Dr Harlan Paul Douglass is the prime mover in the application of this method, and as long ago as 1930 he produced a book of considerable size and importance on *Protestant Co-operation in American Cities*, which included many case-studies, tables and answers to questionnaires. This was followed in 1934 by a work of even greater importance, *Church Unity Movements in the United States*, which includes, in addition to case-studies, thirty-seven tables of answers to questionnaires.[3] Last year Dr Douglass published a pamphlet supplementary to his other volumes in which he gives sixteen examples of co-operation and has a useful selection on "General Interpretations in the Light of Experience."[4] He classifies the unifications under three main heads: "Undenominational Churches," "Federated Churches," and "Denominational Community Churches."

Clearly, of course, the patterns enumerated by Dr Douglass apply only to Protestant denominations which have, as he puts it, "outgrown any sectarian limitations." Much has undoubtedly been achieved in this way, and we frequently find two such distinct sects as the Congregational and Presbyterian uniting and each managing to bring into the unity that which in their own denominations they consider most worth preserving.

Dr Douglass sets out to answer the question as to what these local unions and federations contribute to the problem of the unity of the whole Church of Christ, and he is careful to point out that "nothing that Church unity in local communities can

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[1] H. Paul Douglass, *Church Unity Movements in the United States*, p. 4, gives the Protestant membership as two-thirds of the whole.

[2] Douglass, *op. cit.*, p. 43. This book is of first importance for studying the American reunion field.

[3] Both these books are published under the auspices of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York.

[4] *United Local Churches : An Interpretation illustrated by Case Studies*, New York, 1940.

do will be enough apart from the solution of larger problems of unity by movements functioning on a national and world scale."[1]

The weakness of this method, as well as its strength, is easily apparent. The local Churches have been driven together by force of circumstance either because they were literally unable to carry on in isolation owing to dwindling membership or increased overhead expenses, or because changing social conditions were calling for a greater effort than the divided denominations could attempt. In no case that Dr Douglass records did they come together because they believed as one. Generally their articles of common belief are made of quite secondary importance and their covenants of unity extremely vague. Nor can we always feel that the motives for any close federation are adequate. Professor Ralph A. Felton, who contributes a valuable little study on *Local Church Co-operation in Rural Communities* (New York: Home Missions Council, 1940), cites, with apparent approval, the following case: " Sometimes two or more competitive Churches in the same community federate long enough to learn to work together, and then they become one united denominational Church. Sectarian feeling prevents them in the beginning from completely uniting. With a loose federation they feel they can separate again at any time if they wish. It is a ' trial marriage ' only. But they soon find it is better to have one strong united Church than two competitive struggling organizations. The pastor dislikes caring for the two or three sets of denominational machinery in the same congregation. Instead of the union being a trial marriage, he often feels he has two or three mothers-in-law in the same house, as he tries to please the various denominational requirements and meet all his ' quotas.' Before long, with his encouragement, the people decide to form one denominational Church."

Undoubtedly the most important section of Dr Felton's pamphlet from the Anglican point of view is that in which he discusses " The Larger Parish," which is " a group of Churches affiliated for the purpose of co-operating in certain fields of action. The emphasis is on co-operation rather than upon union."[2] The details he gives of these larger parishes are extremely illuminating. He has studied 178 Churches that have co-operated in this way, and he finds that, whereas the Congregational Church, the Friends, the Church of the Brethren, the Unitarian, Federated and Cumberland Presbyterian each has a co-operative ratio of 100 per cent., the Episcopal Church has one of only 22 per cent., coming at the bottom of the list. In many cases it is difficult to see how this can be justified where it is made clear that the co-operation is merely for certain specific objects, and that there is no question of doctrinal compromise or of intercommunion. An example of what may

[1] *United Local Churches*, p. 31. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

be done in one of these larger parishes is that of the Southern Cayuga Larger Parish in New York. Their co-operation program includes the following: Oct. 26-Nov. 30—Leadership Training School, Courses in Peace Action, New Testament, Worship and Religious Living; the estimated total attendance was 350. Dec. 7—Parents' Conference on Observation of Christmas. Feb. 12—World Day of Prayer for Missions. In July there was a visitation of an international team of young people; activities in vacation schools, youth picnics, religious films, missionary plays, etc.

The so-called "rural church" in America is, it need hardly be pointed out, a very different thing from the English village church and, generally speaking, its whole method of life and thought is different. None the less, it is undoubtedly true that union must come from the layman in the pew as well as the Archbishop or Moderator at the top. It is also true that religious conversatism, both in England and America, is strongest in the rural community, and the reaction of the rural layman, be he a Middle-West farmer or a Devonshire farmer, to any union which is to operate must be taken seriously into account. The Methodist Union of 1932 in this country, and the more recent Methodist Union in America, are still very uneasy unities largely because they were effected too much from one end, and the people who make up the bulk of the congregations were not sufficiently informed or instructed on the matter. So once again America has something to teach us in two bulletins published last year by the Christian Rural Fellowship in New York.[1] Particularly valuable is that by Dr Mark Rich, Secretary of the Town and Country Work of the American Baptist Home Mission Society. Again the emphasis is on co-operation rather than union proper, but he points out strongly that "inter-Church co-operation and unity is a practical expedient which is necessitated by the conditions of our times. That is a fact. Inter-Church co-operation is practical. More than that, in some places there must be interdenominational co-operation or nothing or chaos." If that was true of rural America in 1940, how much more is that likely to be the case after some possible few more years of war in rural England! Dr Rich also points out that neither the "non-sectarian sect" nor the attitude of mind which says, "It doesn't matter what one believes; I would just as soon join one Church as the other"—which he bluntly calls "escapist"—has been fruitful "because they fail to recognize certain elements essential to co-operation and unity." The elements which these approaches fail to recognize are, of course, those which are explicit in the New Testament.

[1] *The Rural Church and World Christian Unity*, by Hermann N. Morse and Mark A. Dawber, Bulletin No. 48; *Effective Techniques in developing Unity and Co-operation among Rural Churches*, by Mark Rich, Bulletin No. 49.

One of the most important pamphlets recently published in America on reunion is *A Primer on Church Unity*.[1] The booklet contains two study outlines and a section containing source material. The booklet is prepared for study groups and, in addition to its outlines for actual study-group sessions, contains valuable hints as to how these may be conducted jointly, where possible, by Presbyterians and members of the Episcopal Church. More important still, the material is prepared mainly for college students and other young people, while the second study outline is sufficiently self-contained and simple to be studied easily and with profit by ordinary parochial youth fellowships. It has obviously been prepared to pave the way for the further discussions on the proposed Presbyterian - Episcopal Concordat, but the material and suggestions, if followed at all literally, would lead to modifications in the concordat which would be of first-rate and practical importance.

A further booklet for study-groups is an introductory study to the findings of the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences.[2] This is designed either for a course on the actual material contained in the pamphlet, or as a guide for study on the actual reports of the Conferences. On the whole its main purpose seems to be the latter, and its questions for discussion are both searching and practical, while the " Ten Steps Toward Unity " with which it ends are entirely admirable.

As a result of discussions between Anglicans and Congregationalists in the Diocese of Chicago in 1933-34, the late Bishop George Craig Stewart appointed a commission of ten priests in his diocese to meet ten Congregationalist ministers appointed by the Congregational Association of Chicago, to hold conversations at regular intervals. As a result of those conversations a small book has been produced under the editorship of Douglas Horton, one of the Congregational ministers who took part.[3] As a result of their conversations they are able to make a number of concrete suggestions for co-operation and also to give some guidance to future groups that meet in this way. On the subject of the sacraments they have made no attempt to harmonize the discrepancies, but they have faced them frankly and not attempted either compromise or minimization. " We have classified these differences, as they are encountered in the local Church, as ritualistic, credal, governmental, and, not least, as those which arise in respect of the sacraments " (p. 73). The Episcopal order and the Congregational order are printed in parallel columns, and are followed by valuable comments.

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[1] Published by the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church.

[2] *Getting Together*, published by the Forward Movement Commission, Cincinatti, Ohio.

[3] *The Basic Formula for Church Union*, Chicago, 1938.

There are also good essays on "The Individual Principle," "The Collective Principle," "The Interaction of the Two Principles," "The Way of Reconciliation," "The Spirit of Anglicanism," "The Spirit of Congregationalism," "The Basis of Church Membership," and on various forms in which contacts may be made, whether on a parochial, diocesan, national or world scale. Probably this small book, both in spirit and matter, is the most constructive and realistic of all such Reports.[1]

HENRY R. T. BRANDRETH.

LINCOLN.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

*(Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.)*

JAMES CLARKE: P. Hartill (Ed.), *Into the Way of Peace* (6s.).

DACRE PRESS: A. L. Maycock, *The Apocalypse* (5s.).

EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE: S. Dark, *The Things that make a Man.* (1s.); W. O. Greenwood, *Christianity and the Mechanists* (9s.).

FABER AND FABER: A. G. Hebert, S.S.M., *The Throne of David* (12s. 6d.).

MACMILLAN: V. Taylor, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (10s. 6d.).

MOWBRAYS: W. H. G. Holmes, *Memories of the Supernatural in East and West* (5s.); H. A. Wilson, *Death over Haggerston* (3s. 6d.).

NATIONAL SOCIETY AND S.P.C.K.: F. B. Flint, *Talks on the Sunday Gospels* (5s.).

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS: H. House, *The Dickens World* (10s. 6d.).

SOUTHPORT GUARDIAN: N. C. Oatridge, *What Next? The Church and the War: a Review and a Policy* (6d.). A pamphlet written in a really effective style; but, as is the case with most publications on this subject, the diagnosis carries much more conviction than the proposed cure.

[1] Copies of it, price 50 cents, may be obtained from the Morehouse-Gorham Co., 14, East Forty-First Street, New York City.

# BOOK REVIEWS

THE MIRACLE-STORIES OF THE GOSPELS. By Alan Richardson. S.C.M. Press. 6s.

Some thirty years ago the Rev. J. M. Thompson, of Magdalen College, Oxford, published a book called *Miracles in the New Testament*, the purpose of which was to establish, by means of a rationalistically-determined historical criticism, an objective account of the facts underlying the miracle-stories in the Gospels, discriminating legend from history, and setting forth, for the satisfaction of a scientifically-minded generation, a picture of events as they might be supposed actually to have happened. Theology was not allowed to affect the investigation, since it was at that time widely supposed that theology and history could be held rigidly apart from one another. Inevitably the results were such as to flutter the orthodox dovecotes.

The contrast presented by Mr Richardson's *The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels* reflects interestingly the changed "climate of opinion" in the theological world of to-day. Gone is the divorce between history and theology. The idea that it is possible, by dint of the application of historico-critical methods, to construct an objective picture of an alleged "Jesus of history," uncoloured and uninterpreted by the assumptions and presuppositions of Christian faith, is abandoned as the vain dream that it actually is. "If we had access," writes Mr Richardson, "to a history of Jesus written by some contemporary unbeliever, it would then have been possible to believe in an historical Jesus who was *not* the Son of God, the worker of miracles and the vanquisher of the tomb; but we have no such history, and therefore the only historical view remains that of the Evangelists, and the only alternative to it is a complete scepticism concerning the possibility of our knowledge of Jesus at all." It is in harmony with this conviction that Mr Richardson's first chapter deals with the theology behind the miracle-story tradition, and that it is the essential thesis of his book that the miracle-stories are themselves part of the Gospel, that they are "written for our learning," and that they "belong to the sphere of the κήρυγμα," while at the same time they "contain much that is relevant to the conduct of our lives as Christian disciples in the matter of faith and prayer and obedience, and thus they belong to the sphere of διδαχή as well." The miracles are prophetic "signs," they are Messianic, they are an evidence that "the powers of the Age to Come" are already at work, and they constitute, for our Lord Himself as for His disciples, authentic and manifest tokens of the drawing near of the Kingdom of God. They set forth our Lord as the healer, the bringer of forgiveness, the supreme teacher

with authority, the conqueror of demons, the giver of life to the dead. The Johannine interpretation of the miracles as "signs," instinct with a vital and deep spiritual meaning, is already the implied or explicit point of view of the Synoptic tradition, the contrast between the Synoptic and the Johannine presentations of the "Good News about Jesus" being, here as elsewhere, a matter much rather of form than of substance.

On the lines indicated Mr Richardson has written an extremely good book. He breaks an effective lance with Dibelius and other "form-critics," who in certain of the miracle-stories of the Gospels have seemed to themselves to detect the instrusion into the Evangelical record of "tales" (*Novellen*) "secular" in motive and origin, and supposed to have been "narrated not by the *preachers*, but by a special class of 'story-tellers,'" the object in view being merely to "attest the superiority of Jesus as a miracle-worker over all other miracle-workers, saviours and demi-gods." Mr Richardson succeeds without difficulty in exhibiting the "tales" as being as instinct with directly evangelical significance and as playing as vital a part in the presentation of the Gospel as a whole as (for example) the "pronouncement stories" or any other element in the Gospel tradition. Preachers will find in his book abundant hints and materials for sermons based on the miracle-tradition in the Gospels, and the work has the essential merit of understanding the Gospels from the point of view from which they were written.

The historical question proper, of course, remains. On the one hand, the miracles, even supposing them to have literally happened precisely as they are described, do not "prove" or establish anything. "To understand the meaning of the . . . tradition it is first necessary to have penetrated the incognito of Jesus, and to have seen behind the Jesus of Galilee the Christ of New Testament faith." On the other hand, "even if we admit, having regard to the manner in which the tradition of our Lord's miracles was handed down in the Church, that the precise details of *how* any particular miracle took place cannot be ascertained with certainty by us, there is still an important sense in which the miracle-stories contain the truth of history. That is to say, the issues which were raised by the claim of Jesus to work miracles were the actual 'historical' issues which were at stake between Jesus and His disciples on the one hand, and the Pharisees and the multitudes on the other." In general, Mr Richardson's conclusion on the historical issue is that "it is not possible to state more than that Jesus was believed by those who knew Him best to have worked the very miracles which the prophets had associated with the dawning of the Messianic Age. Faith itself will wish to draw the discreet veil of a reverent agnosticism over the desire to dogmatize as to what was or was not possible, or what precisely happened on any specific occasion; faith alone can overcome the desire to find 'proofs' or to seek

for a sign. Each reader of the Gospels must, on the basis of his own studies and insights, make his own estimate of the historical probability of any particular episode for himself."

It seems to me that these are wise words; and I wish for Mr Richardson's book the widest possible circle of readers.

JOHN DERBY.

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A LETTER TO GREAT BRITAIN FROM SWITZERLAND. By Karl Barth. Christian News-Letter Books. Sheldon Press. 1s. 6d.

English Christians owe a profound debt of gratitude to Professor Karl Barth for this address, at once so brotherly and generous, and so searching in its suggested criticism of our English point of view. Surely none of us can read it without experiencing a new sense not only of respect, but also of affection, for the great theologian who is its author, and without deriving fresh encouragement from his words of sympathy and warning. Personally I feel that at *heart* I am entirely at one with him in all he says about the issues of the war, and about the duty which is laid upon us Christians to support in God's name our country in the cause for which it is fighting. But I must confess at the same time that my *head* is very much puzzled by the theological distinctions, and by the absence of distinctions, on which his questions and his appeal to us are based.

The essence of that appeal is that we should rest our whole justification for fighting Germany on our faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and not on any ground of "Natural Law." Only then, he thinks, can we really rely on God, and not on our own moral and material resources. "Natural Law" gives us "principles which might also be those of a pious Hindu, Buddhist or Atheist"; whereas "our resistance to Hitler will be built on a really sure foundation only when we resist him unequivocally in the name of peculiarly Christian truth." All arguments based on Natural Law lead not to the light of clear decisions, but to Munich. Yet, paradoxically, Barth goes on at once to express the fear that, if we stay ourselves on Natural Law, we shall find ourselves plunged, not in shady compromises, but in political fanaticism. Finally, Utopianism is another delusion which, according to him, springs from the same root of error. For, "if men either openly or secretly consider Natural Law to be the revelation which governs their attitude, then they cannot help escaping from the present and taking refuge in some self-made shape of things to come." For Natural Law provides but a human ideal.

Now I desire to be as eager as any man that we should resist the temptations of unworthy political compromise, of a fanatical "crusade," and of belief in a temporal millennium. But how all these contrary dangers spring from reliance upon Natural Law I do not see. I should have thought that unworthy political compromise was at least as likely to arise from supposing

that the natural law of morality and conscience has no absolute authority; a fanatical crusade from supposing that, since the gospel (whatever it is one believes in) makes no appeal to the natural man, it must be imposed on him by force; and belief in a temporal millennium from supposing that the Kingdom of God is to be established supernaturally at a certain date in history upon the earth. In other words, I understand neither what Barth means by "Natural Law" nor the logic by which he draws deductions from his conception of it. He does not define his terms.

I infer, however, that in Barth's theology "Natural Law" is somehow bound up with the law of inevitable moral progress as taught by the evolutionary idealism of the nineteenth century. I should, of course, entirely agree that this law is a delusion. But to me, and, I should imagine, to most Anglican and Catholic theologians, "Natural Law" (in the moral sphere) means something quite different. It is the law appointed for man's nature by God in creating man. Because man has free will, he does not observe it automatically; and because man has sinned, he has ceased to be able to discern it clearly or to observe it fully at all, though his conscience always bears a dim and confused witness to its being and authority. From it man derives his sense of duty and of the absolute difference between Right and Wrong. I wholly agree with Barth when he says that "as soon as some people in responsible positions began to realize that, as far as Adolf Hitler was concerned, what we have to do is simply and solely to defend the Right as such against the Wrong . . . war broke out." I entirely agree again when he says: "The State would lose all meaning and would be failing in its duty as an appointed minister of God . . . if it failed to defend the bounds between Right and Wrong by the threat, and by the actual use, of the sword." But I should say (I do not know how far this may be an individual opinion) that all action taken on behalf of Right as such against Wrong is action taken in obedience to Natural Law, though Christians know that they need the supernatural grace of Christ to enable them really to take it. Beyond and above the sphere of Natural Law altogether is action taken in the name of the Gospel, which speaks not in terms of right versus wrong, but of love, sin and forgiveness. This latter kind of action, specially characteristic of those who are "in Christ," is reconciling and redemptive; and it anticipates the life of the world to come, where neither rights nor wrongs can exist.

I do not think that the difference which I am indicating is merely a question of the use of words. The fundamental point at issue is whether God's self-revelation to man is, as Barth seems to assume, a *single* revelation in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, or rather *twofold*, first in the Natural Law of creation given in the Logos "by whom all things were made," and

secondly in the personal descent of that same Logos for the redemption of man who had sinned against his law. Barth's insistence on the singleness of the divine revelation obliges him to find the sole source of all valid authority in the crucified and risen Christ. Thus the State (whose authority he is eager both to secure and restrict) becomes for him "the sign of the consecration which the world has received through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." For the same reason he is obliged to deny the possibility of any definable basis of co-operation between Christian and non-Christian in any field of action whatever. For if a Christian finds himself to be acting on any principle which a non-Christian can acknowledge, he is thereby shown to be not a true Christian at all.

Of course, any further consideration of these points would take us deep into a discussion of the first principles of Christian theology, which is not possible here. But I cannot help thinking that, for purposes of mutual understanding, it is unfortunate that Barth should assume that his opponents, who attach some validity to Natural Law, are relying upon the authority of a merely human ideal. Of course, if Natural Law is just man-made, it has no true authority over man. But the case of Barth's opponents is that Natural Law, dimly discerned by man's conscience everywhere, proceeds from the God by whom man was made. Their case is based on the doctrine of a twofold revelation.

I cannot conclude this review without making two further remarks. First, I am conscious of a profound sympathy and agreement with Barth's practical conclusions as to the right attitude of Christians both to the State and to the war, though I should reach these conclusions by a theological route which is different from his. Secondly, I should like to record my gratitude for the reprinting of Barth's two letters to French Protestants, which form an appendix to this volume. The first of these, in particular, strikes me as the simplest and most impressive statement of the Christian justification for the war against Hitlerism which I have read anywhere. All the three letters in this book are to be most earnestly commended to the study of English Christians.

Oliver C. Quick.

Oxford.

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Mind and Deity. By John Laird. G. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

In describing the disabilities under which Queen Victoria's statesmen laboured in personal interviews with their sovereign, Bagehot observes that a man cannot very well *argue* upon his knees. If argument be legitimate in philosophical theology (and, if it is not, there is no case for natural theology), the same observation may properly be borne in mind by Gifford Lecturers.

There will always be a place for theology written from within a standpoint of faith, describing what can be seen from that standpoint, as there will be a place for interpretations of the world in terms of personal religious experience. Nor should we necessarily conclude that such theologies are not rationally defensible. But when anyone is giving them to us, we like him to show frankly what he is doing. Is there also a place for natural theology strictly so called (*i.e.*, theology based, as Professor Laird describes it, on " the sort of evidence that would reasonably be used by anyone who argued closely on data that a reasonable man would take seriously in every field of enquiry ")? It might be contended that natural theology based only on such general considerations is not likely to be very productive. But, even so, we should be glad to know precisely how much it does produce; and then those who would go further, drawing on faith, revelation, or personal religious experience, would at least know what they were doing.

Professor Laird knows well that in metaphysics proof is difficult and its standards exacting. The merit of his Gifford Lectures is that, in weighing the arguments for theism within a purely natural theology, he does not try to prove too much. Thereby he makes it more possible to see what these arguments amount to. His method is to consider what theistic interpretations of cosmology are speculatively possible, and what empirical evidence there may be for supposing any of them to be true or at least probable. In the course of doing this he has some shrewd and judicious observations to make on theories which have formed the stock-in-trade of philosophical theology (*e.g.*, that " necessary " is a term of modality applicable to *judgments* and not to existence, so that followers of the Cosmological Argument must show what can significantly be meant by talking of " necessary being "—a point which seems to me to have had insufficient attention). I read with special gratitude his chapter on the relation of value and existence. Sometimes, however, his discussion would seem to need pursuing further. For instance, in attacking the Ontological Argument it is comparatively easy to endorse Kant's criticism, on the lines that existence is not a qualifying predicate. But is there another, and perhaps more hopeful, approach to the argument, by which we ask what existential conditions enable us to form the idea of a perfect being? (This seems to me to be the purport of the Cartesian form.) Again, Professor Laird's discussion of the meaning of *gratia infusa* seems unduly slight and unsympathetic; perhaps the rigorous limitation of his subject held him back from closer investigation of what Thomists (for instance) might mean by supernature or by charity.

Some of Professor Laird's most interesting observations concern the relative strength of the arguments for an impersonal theism, pointing to a deiform character or pattern in existence.

This is apt to be dismissed somewhat scathingly both in pulpit apologetics and among believers in personal theism. But it is one of the serious metaphysical alternatives, and if it is dismissed, the arguments for it should be considered in their strong form and without misrepresentation. In showing the relative philosophical strength of this type of theism, Professor Laird's book should thus be of real service to those to whom it may be uncongenial as well as those to whom it is sympathetic.

Dorothy M. Emmet.

Manchester.

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History of the Schoolmen. By E. Crewdson Thomas. Williams and Norgate. 30s.

The title of this work is somewhat misleading, for it cannot be called a " history " in the accepted use of the term. Continuous narrative has been reduced to a minimum, and the style is encyclopedic rather than literary. But there are plenty of facts here, and the wealth of information adequately supports the claim of the book to be " a handbook for the benefit of the student and also . . . a convenient work of reference." Nothing of this kind dealing with the medieval schoolmen has so far been available for the English reader. Professor Powicke's work on the Universities approaches the period from a specialist's angle. The translation of M. de Wulf's *Histoire de Philosophie Mediévale* has been out-dated by a later French edition. And we still have to look for a handy English digest of Uberweg's *History of Philosophy*. The difficulty is to find a reference-book which covers the ground and is not too large for the private library. Mr Crewdson Thomas has here made a brave effort to fill the gap.

The introductory " cursory review " of Greek philosophers and early Christian Fathers is followed by a series of brief summaries of the life and work of some two hundred writers. These range from Erigena in the ninth century to Suarez in the seventeenth. While the more famous Christian leaders of thought, whose names have since become household words, are included, most of the entries introduce names which will be entirely new to the modern reader. Here and there the treatment is incomplete. For instance, an inquirer should certainly be informed that Cajetan is the usual name for Thomas de Vio or that John of St Thomas was John Poinsot, who wrote the beautiful, profound *Cursus Theologicus* and *Cursus Philosophicus*. And where is Nicolas d'Autrecourt, " who," Gerald Vann has said, " bears a startling resemblance to David Hume "? Again, apart from the remark that Roger Bacon's " chief discoveries " were " the magnifying power of convex lenses . . . and also the inherent powers of gunpowder, the actual discovery of which is now no longer attributed to him " (p. 497), the author expresses no appreciation for the wide variety of interests of the schoolmen. In all fairness

to them he should have acknowledged that in omitting their scientific discussions on the grounds that the conclusions were merely provisional (pp. xiii, 278) he is acting on a principle which is not only his, but theirs. On the whole, however, the book is a striking tribute to the scholars of those stormy years—" affairs in Europe were in a very disturbed condition " (p. 648) —who, without any desire for reputation or profit, and in spite of the inevitable acrimony of disputations in the schools, toiled in obscurity to keep alive the various traditions of sound learning, peaceful living, and *contemplatio*.

It is no accident that the author gives as many as three out of his thirty-one chapters to a consideration of St Thomas Aquinas. It may be true that the Angelic Doctor's modern fame exceeds his prominence in his own day. More reasons than one account for this: his writings are more accessible to us than those of any of his contemporaries, his personality is a delight to the biographer, his thought now possesses the powerful official support of one of the great Churches in Christendom, his poetry has become inseparable from fervent eucharistic worship. But none of these is the circumstance which sets him head and shoulders above his fellow-schoolmen. By quoting extensively from his predecessors (he had a very happy knack of endorsing those opinions of his opponents which he accepted as true) he gave them a sure place in history, and by leaving a *corpus* of Christianized aristotelianism to his contemporaries and successors he opened the avenues of future speculation and dogmatic teaching. His was the genius of originality. Thus Mr Crewdson Thomas pauses often in his examination of earlier authorities to note those quoted by Aquinas, and he sees that later generations naturally took sides for or against St Thomas, grouping themselves as Dominicans and Franciscans or Thomists and Scotists. But there is yet another cousinship within the pedigree. It is hinted at in these pages as a distinction between " Thomists-Dominicans " and " Thomists other than Dominicans." This might well be made explicit. It represents the division of opinion between those, on the one hand, who construe devotion to the Master as re-interpretation and renewed application of his leading motifs to contemporary affairs, and those, on the other hand, who persistently refuse to move outside the bare annotation of his writings for fear of verbal disloyalty. The latter tradition must ultimately lock itself within its own library, the former strides out to work in the world's mission-fields and to remake human society. The distinction is an important one; for if it is true it provides the justification of those modern Thomist writers who insist that St Thomas's principles are vitally relevant to present-day perplexities.

There are some unfortunate mistakes in the text of the book. The opening sentence of Chapter I is ungrammatical. Several instances of bad punctuation, inconsistent anglicism of proper

names, misspellings (such as "de Burg" for "de Burgh" p. xvii; "Bodelean" and "St Edmund's Hall" for "Bodleian" and "St Edmund Hall," p. 221), reduplication in the index (*s.v.* "Alexander of Hales" and "Hales," "Reason, higher," and "Reason, lower") suggest that the proof-reading has not been all that it might be. This is a pity. Such errors are unworthy of both the size and the subject of the book.

W. W. S. March.

Hothfield.

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The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Pitaka), Vol. II (Suttavibhanga). Translated by J. B. Horner. Humphrey Milford. 10s. 6d.

The importance of studying the sources at first hand for the understanding of a religion can hardly be over-estimated. The investigation and re-investigation of original documents is particularly called for to-day in the case of Buddhism, because the generally accepted interpretation of the Founder's message is sharply disputed at the present time by foremost scholars of the religion. Behind even the earliest records, however, are many years of oral tradition, so that the written sources need very critical and sympathetic study before inferences as to the nature of Buddha's teaching can be made. Miss Horner's apparently careful and fully annotated translation of the *Suttavibhanga* is, therefore, welcome as a valuable addition to the "Sacred Books of the Buddhists" available to Western scholars, especially in view of the fact that the rules of the *Pātimokkha* of Rhys Davids and Oldenberg (*The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xiii) are out of print.

The *Vinaya-Pitaka* is that section of the Buddhist sacred literature which deals with the monastic Order, the *Suttavibhanga* being a subdivision giving an "exposition in full" of offences against ordinary etiquette and morality which incidentally throws a great deal of light on the actual working of Buddhism in daily life. In the place of divine worship there is held the recital of the *Pātimokkha* list of offences involving the expiation, by due confession before the Order, of any offences against the rules. The present translation forms part of the *Pātimokkha—i.e.*, "disburdenment" or release from the burden of offences. Each chapter opens with a story showing why the rule in question came to be framed, the breaking of any rule being atoned for either by forfeiture of some article relating to the offence (Nissaggiya rules) or by simple confession only (Pacittiya rules).

What strikes one most forcibly on reading this translation is the legal character of a religion which was essentially at the outset a religion of redemption. The keynote of Buddha's message is the enlightenment or insight he claimed to have

received, which released the disciple once and for all from the fetters of craving or unregenerate desire. The stories of the *Suttavibhanga*, however, depict the framing of rules on numerous petty wrongs or more serious offences against morality with but the flimsiest reference to the insight that destroys unworthy desire. Miss Horner suggests that the rules were probably to help beginners and backsliders, and rightly adds that the legal character of the *Vinaya* is " based on a high and mature standard of morality, justice and common sense." Nevertheless the *Suttavibhanga* does give the impression that something vital has fallen away from a religion which stressed the vision of a higher order (*dharma*) annihilating thirst and greed.

F. Harold Smith.

Chenies.

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Japan in the World Crisis. By C. J. Stranks. Christian News-Letter Books. Sheldon Press. 1s. 6d.

We have been so accustomed to accept Japan's leadership in the Far East that a sentence in Dr Paton's recent book, *The Church and the New Order*, came as rather a shock. He wrote: " Japan . . . is out of court as the leader of the East." Mr Stranks' little volume goes a long way to substantiate this statement. Not that the book is unsympathetic, nor is it blind to those weaknesses of Western civilization which Japan has all too faithfully copied. But it sets forth in compact form the forces which have led up to Japan's present policy.

This policy lies in a sense of mission which, though the immediate product of social, political and economic internal conditions, finds its professed justification in a fresh conception of " the imperial way." This and its implications are accepted with what, to foreign observers, seems a certain naivety, and, incidentally, a total disregard of the lessons of history. Higher critical methods may not be applied to Japanese history.

This sense of world-mission on the part of Japan is of very recent growth; indeed, it was the end of the third decade of this century, rather than its beginning, as the author suggests, which saw the idea first taking serious shape. Japan's successful flouting of the League of Nations, when she chose to deal with certain very real grievances on the mainland, opened the eyes of her military leaders to greater possibilities, and enabled them to stage a much-longed-for come-back.

At present these nationalistic forces are dominant, and one of the values of the book is the way in which it shows how they are being maintained, despite the army's failure to liquidate the " China incident." It is still largely assumed in Japan that the Axis powers are going to win the war.

When Germany is defeated, we shall probably see a great swing-over in Japan; fortunately she still has statesmen competent to take the lead when that time comes. Then, if she is helped

to get out of her continental ventures without losing too much face, and at the same time she receives that economic help adumbrated in the Roosevelt-Churchill Eight Points, we may yet see her playing a worthy and disinterested part in " the establishment of a new order which shall ensure the permanent stability of East Asia " (statement by the Japanese Cabinet, p. 52).

In the meantime Japan is sick: as her old friend and ally we hope that no violent operation will prove necessary to restore her to health.

We cordially commend this book to those who want in succinct form a summary of events and movements which have led up to the present state of affairs in the Far East. The style is not always easy, and at times ideas are rather jerkily expressed, but the book nevertheless deserves careful study.

W. H. Murray Walton.

Eastbourne.

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The Church, Impotent or Triumphant? By Sidney Dark. Gollancz. 3s. 6d.

The ex-Editor of the *Church Times* has written a book most convenient for these times, and one that should be read by everybody who desires to do his utmost to win the peace.

Mr Dark's life experience gives him the right to be heard. He has been for many years a student of politics, national and international, and for the last seventeen years he edited the most widely read Church newspaper in England, and thus was brought into very close touch with the minds of a vast number of Church people of all kinds.

This book shows him to be in the true line of the prophetic succession both in its strength and in its weakness. The strength is seen particularly in two chapters, the weakness in the conclusion! His opening chapter is a diagnosis of the causes which have led to our present situation. Obsessed by the fear of a godless communism, the Christian Church stood complacently aside while the forces of tyranny, here and on the Continent and in America, gathered strength under a banner no less godless and even more ruthless. The chapter on Property and Tyranny, too, is of great value, for it clearly indicates the distance which the average member of Christ's Church has strayed from the basic teaching of her Master on the subject of possessions, and when in the third chapter the author deals with the present condition and outlook of ecclesiastical groups he is treading on ground of which he has an expert's knowledge.

Of all this Mr Dark writes not only with full knowledge but with real Christian insight.

Yet the conclusion of his argument is most disappointing, and illustrates again the truth that the task of the prophet is to denounce the evil rather than to become tritely constructive.

Mr Dark would find salvation in the ballot box—a fatal simplification of the problem which faces the world, for until the mind of Europe is converted it is vain to hope that a Christian state of living will be established among us. The discussions which " Malvern " desiderates, and Mr Dark deplores, are quite surely necessary before the goal is reached which both are seeking.

V. Spencer Ellis.

St Asaph.

## SHORTER NOTICES

The English Poems of John Milton. Introduction by Charles Williams. The World's Classics. Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.

Text, type, and format speak for themselves in the title. A reader's guide by Mr Walter Skeat is a workmanlike index of allusions and obsolete words or constructions. The introduction is more controversial.

Mr Williams usefully calls attention to the close correspondence between what used to be said in praise of Milton and what is now said against him. It was not his modern critics who first found him aloof, sonorous, solemn, and wanting in drama or human interest. But they did venture to suggest that these are not the qualities of England's second greatest poet. No one, so far as I know, except Mr Pound, who denies most things, has denied that Milton is, in Mr Murry's phrase here quoted, " evidently great in some valid sense." No one that I know said that Mr Eliot had destroyed him in a parenthesis. What Dr Leavis did say, rather heavily, was that he had dislodged him in an aside, dislodged him from his former pre-eminence, unloved but worshipped. That is not quite the same thing.

Mr Williams in effect accepts the dislodgement when he proceeds to build up a largely unfamiliar case for Milton. Over *Comus* he seems to me to be on strong ground. On some points of *Paradise Lost* he is suggestive, but I cannot say that I find his use of quotation entirely convincing. " So Eve, in a state of passionate and pure love, to Adam:

> My author and disposer, what thou bid'st
> Unargued I obey."

Very proper, but hardly passionate and pure. Nor can I see a " shy softness of hope " in

> This further consolation yet secure
> I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
> Such favour I unworthy am vouchsafed,
> By me the promised Seed shall all restore.

The last line is magnificent, but it is not soft. Nor can I agree for one moment that " ' dovelike ' and ' pregnant ' are words

which cannot be sonorous and tremendous; it would make nonsense of them emotionally." " Dovelike sats't brooding on the vast abyss " is a line meant to draw on all the solemn associations, for Bible-reading Englishmen, of Genesis i. I can see that Milton enjoyed the discomfiture of Satan, but I still have an uncomfortable sense that Satan's speeches too often embody an admirable statement of the standpoint of the Whig party, and that Milton had been a Whig. I find this puzzling. Mr Williams is eloquent with his adjectives—of Adam and Eve, " beautiful, august, pure, and lucid," of the whole, " a continual spring of beauty, of goodness, of tenderness, of humility." I am sure that many other readers will be moved, but I remain respectful in the outer court.

GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

KELHAM.

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*The Root of Our Troubles* (S.C.M., 6d.) contains two broadcast talks by Dr Oldham, setting out his teaching with characteristic clarity and depth. Canon L. Hodgson in *The Christian Idea of Liberty* (S.C.M., 1s. 6d.) reprints three papers which have appeared in THEOLOGY and other periodicals, on Liberty, The Creed in Time of War, and Prayer. *In Secret*, by R. Johnston (Mowbrays, 2s.), contains " Seed Thoughts on the Gospel ", of which the following on Mark ix. 40 is a specimen: " *Is on our part.* The Spirit is the Lord of all good life. His grace and charity prompt and support all goodness, wherever found. His pressure actuates all seeking: there is no place for exclusiveness in Jesus." The Bishop of Bradford's *For Beginners in Prayer* (Mowbrays, 1s. 6d.) " is designed for beginners in prayer, for those who have begun to be dissatisfied with their own practice and would like to improve it." *We would see Jesus* (Longmans, 2s. 6d.), by the Bishop of Winchester, is dedicated to " The Deans of Jersey and Guernsey and the clergy of the Channel Islands who remained faithfully with their flocks in their hour of trial," which reminds us that a book intended for Lent, 1941, which could not be noticed here in time, is equally suitable for Lent, 1942, since the circumstances that inspired it have not changed much. *Astrology in the Light of Science and Religion* (S.C.M., 1s. 6d.) is the latest of many services to popular apologetics rendered by Professor C. F. Rogers, and by no means the least. *Britain and the Future* (S.C.M., 2s.), by D. T. Jenkins, is a series of addresses delivered in a Richmond church, dealing with the political situation.

W. K. L. C.

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